World Customize Creator

ワールド・カスタマイズ・クリエーター

ヘロー天気

「著作権侵害コンテンツ」
アルファポリス

World Customize Creator
(ワールド・カスタマイズ・クリエーター)
Chapter
001-083
Hero Tennki
(ヘロー天気)

Story Description:

> Tagami Yusuke, led by a mysterious voice, is summoned to another world, “Caltsio”. He was just a young video-game lover, but Fate decided to make him become the “Evil God of Calamity” of this world, obtaining the ability to create and customize everything, Customize Creation.

Original Story can be found here: Link

Prologue

"Truly, the balance is terrible… This game sucks."

Spatting these words while continuing to mash the buttons on a portable game console he was walking inside the grounds of an old temple, located near his house.

This did not mean that his purpose of coming here was to visit the temple. It has become a habit of his to come here when seeking a quiet and deserted place to play games comfortably. When his mother started shouting, "You are doing nothing but playing games again!", at him, he started looking for a peaceful place to play outside. This temple was the result of his search.

"Damn! I obtained it after all this time, yet I cannot upgrade it… Since it has come to this I will use cheats."

Continuing to move the item, depicted in the 3D game, shown on the screen, with the cursor, he was thinking of how to use the [customization code]. It was a system, used to modify the stats of the item, obtained in an RPG game, however you liked.

While the main theme of the game was orthodox hack and slash (冒険活劇), which is pretty common nowadays, the Item – Customize – Create system played a big part in what got him into playing it.

Still, obviously broken balance and the lack of freedom made a lot of players trashtalk about this game. He turned his attention towards his bag to take out a disk for the [Customization code] for his portable gaming console, and then…

— Come, Evil God —

A voice echoed in his head. At the same time he felt that he was pulled out of his body.

"Wh- What is this?!"

Suddenly, he felt like his entire body was falling off the stairs. He was dumbfounded as he looked at his feet while unconsciously protecting his head. What he saw below him was his own body. He was looking at his own back from a place slightly above his head.

"Wow, this is an out of body experience!… No, something is strange?"

His own body, that he was looking at from above, suddenly looked around restlessly, as if something startled him. Before long, the "him" below put the gaming console in his bag, turned towards the road, and hurriedly left.

"What?… What… the… fuck… just happened…….?"

His vision started to sway like he was underwater and it slowly became dark. Within his hazy consciousness he appeared to float in a huge space, resembling a starry sky. Above, a vast universe, resembling a disk, spread over him

"The elephant and turtle… are not there…"

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This universe existed in the boundary between worlds. The radiance of the shining stars covered the heavens. One could see many different worlds from this boundary, but only the amount of stars bound the worlds together. The worlds floated alone (separately) in this gigantic, disc shaped structure.

The inhabitants of that world called it "Kaltcio"『カルツィオ』. They built countries, prospered, declined, and perished. They gave birth to children, brought them up, and continued to live their lives in this eternally repeating history. Thousands of years are still necessary for them to break free of this world and to understand the secrets that it keeps hidden.

There was a [Will], which continued watching over the history of Kaltcio since the dawn of this world. It could be said it was an existence equal to the Gods of this world. At certain intervals it summoned a messenger from another world in order to maintain and preserve the cycle of life in Kaltcio.

A visitor from another world caused all kinds of ripples in Kaltcio that disrupted the stagnation of the world and opened new paths. Through his effort, he contributed to the cycle of this world.

Once a giant [Dragon] was summoned. Once a figure, hideous for the human eyes, a [Monster], was summoned. They had strength on par with the gods of this world and had greatly contributed to the cycle of the world.

This time again, a visitor from another world, with a power of that of the gods, has been summoned.

— Come, Evil God —

There seemed to be an infinite amount of different worlds. From these numerous worlds, a figure of a young humanoid was summoned.

— You seem to desire power —

The power he desired was an unheard, eccentric thing to those, who were summoned before him. Almost all beings that were summoned before had mighty power to destroy the opponents before them, so they desired eternal life. Even if a person desired power, to defeat his opponents, he would eventually be defeated by old age. Still, those, who desired eternal life, would eventually be broken by repeated loss of those, dear to them, and, eventually, would choose their own demise.

— You will be given the power you desire —

And so, the [Soul of the young one], torn from another world, was given a body of flesh in Kaltcio to fulfill his call.

Chapter 1: Shrine of the evil god

Ding dong

With a ring of chime in his head, Yuusuke Tagami felt his hazy consciousness clear up.

"It's COLD!"

The air was chilly. When he tried to move his body he felt rough stone with his back and bottom. Instinctively opening his eyes, what he saw was a bright, swaying fire of the brazier that lit a room, which looked like it was made entirely from stone. After getting up and finding his body unchanged he looked around again to confirm his surroundings.

It looked like he was lying on a stone pedestal. Somehow he was completely naked. In front of the pedestal there was an altar with a pitch black statue of a being that somehow resembled a human and a monster at the same time and created a sinister atmosphere.

"What the hell is this? Is it some kind of ritual?"

Not knowing if anything was done to his body, Yuusuke, instead of feeling fear or panic, wanted to gather information and to find some clothes.

He got up from the pedestal that looked like a 1 meter height rectangle. Right near it was a small table-like stand upon which there were fruits, resembling mandarins, and a bundle made of slightly withered flowers of various colors. Besides that a fabric, resembling clothes, was lined up.

"It looks like I was an offering at the altar", Yuusuke thought.

The small stand was surely made of stone. The surfaces of both the altar and the pedestal were worn, making them seem old.

"Is that really an offering … rather, what is that."

Having a few doubts he finally decided that in order to find that out he has to make a few sacrifices. Thus he stretched out his hands towards the fabric that the statue of the suspicious altar held in its hands. Being naked made him more anxious than anything else right now. The moment Yuusuke touched white, slightly yellow fabric….

Ding Dong

"?!"

Startled he drew back his hand. It was a sound he heard when he awoke a little while ago. He looked over around the altar but did not see anything out of place. After looking around the stone room one more time and confirming that nothing has changed, he softly touched the fabric.

Nothing happened this time and Yuusuke, after taking the cloth into his hands, being uneasy about his surroundings, attempted to spread it out.

"It's not a women one piece, is it?"

Aside from three holes for arms and head it was just a simple piece of cloth. It held an image of a futon sheet with holes that allowed a person to wear it as a piece of clothing.

"It can't be a paper doll cloth….."

After tightening it around his waist like a koshihimo (NOTE: a type of belt used to tie a kimono. It is used under the obi belt) he looked like a person from ancient times, shown in movies. After he put his clothes on, Yuusuke tried to remember what happened just before he lost consciousness.

"A dream… No it doesn't look like it."

Looking up at the low ceiling of the brazier lit stone room one could see a picture of round, disk shaped land abundant with oceans and mountains. The mural looked like it was taken straight out of the imagination of people of the ancient times. It gave Yuusuke a strong feeling of déjà vu.

"… What could it be…? I heard a strange voice and my body started to float … I have a feeling I've seen this picture before."

The words rather than the voice. Rather than hearing the words directly, it was as if he felt them in a mysterious way. Afterwards he saw his own body stand up and leave the shrine grounds at a quick pace. The memories of what happened afterwards were hazy in his mind.

Yuusuke sighed once, stood up from the pedestal, he was using as a chair, and turned towards the exit of the stone room. Looking from behind the pedestal, in front of him there was an exit with no door, leading to a dark corridor.

Immediately after leaving the room the corridor stretched to the right. After going forward a bit it turned to the left. After that it for some reason turned to the same side again. He took a piece of wood out of the brazier and held it in front of him as a torch.

When he touched the piece of wood, the same chime rang again in his head, but, as Yuusuke got used to it by now, he did not panic.

Curiosity and feelings like uneasiness or anger did not well up inside him. Yuusuke also did not feel his mind freeze in this sudden, unnaturally mysterious situation. Deep is his heart Yuusuke sensed a feeling of acceptance.

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With her pure white hair fluttering in the wind a girl hurried along a small path to the shrine that was built in the woods, located a short distance away from the village.

Sun, you are going to the shrine, right?

"Ah, teacher Zeshald."

An elderly man shouted to a village girl Sun, who was holding multicolored flowers and freshly picked rara (ララ) fruits. Man's name was Zeshald. He was a doctor in a nearby

[Rufk] village. Although dull from age, this blue haired, blue eyed man has received divine protection from [God of water – Shalnar] and was a [divine artist] belonging to [water art users].

—Divine arts users —

Unique powers, called [divine arts] were possessed by four great gods. In this world people believed in the religion of four great gods, governing over [fire], [water], [earth], and [wind], who, supposedly, have created the world.

The majority of the people have received divine blessing and protection from the gods and, as a proof of that, had the ability to use divine arts. The law was that one person could use one divine skill and, under the effect of the blessing of the god, their hair and eyes changed color to the pure color of the god.

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Zeshald could use a divine art of Shalnar, God of water, who is the second strongest of the four great gods and is considered a God of average strength. Because he has mastered healing type water divine art he was so influential that if he lived in the society of divine arts users he would be able to lead a luxurious life. Still, he was eccentric…

"Teacher, are those new books again?"

"This time they seem to be from an old Nossentes shrine."

"That shrine as well, of course from the village of those without powers …?"

"After all it is unlikely that powerless people and the evil god have some kind of relationship."

—The powerless literally meant people that could not use any divine art and, therefore, were differentiated from the divine arts users.

Divine arts users have created a [rank system], governed by the differences in the divine arts. According to this system, people with similar abilities lived together in separate towns. Powerless people on the other hand were not allowed to enter these towns, so they banded to villages and communities.

A typical community where powerless people lived was called [a village of the powerless]. Thus in the old villages of the powerless people, spread all over the land, there were several mysterious shrines, called [shrines of the powerless]. Those, that studied those shrines, mentioned altars enshrining ominous deities. Thus the shrines have been started to be called [Evil God shrines].

In Kaltcio the [Evil God] was known as the [God of calamity] since the old times. According to the legend, it descended to Kaltcio roughly once every 300 years and brought calamities with him. This year exactly 300 years had passed since the last calamity.

However, the [last calamity] and the [god of calamity] was only a legend as there was no written information about the events 300 years ago neither about those that happened 300 more years ago. More than half of the educated people believed that this

god was a superstition.

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“An Evil God?… Does it really exist?”

“Hoho, I, too, know a lot of legends about evil beast, but I do think that it exists.”

The [God of Calamity] is thought to be linked with events such natural disasters and epidemic outbreaks. Powerless people also got injured or sick, but, unlike divine arts users, they did not have any arts like the healing arts the water users had, which could immediately cure them.

Thus in case of a large scale disaster or an epidemic the powerless people took the brunt of the damage. They built the shrines for the Evil God near their villages to pray for those great disasters to avoid them. It was thought that for this reason a statue resembling an evil god was enshrined in these temples.

“In that case, for teacher to come to Rufk, the evil god should not be scary, right?”

“Hohoho, You are a good girl, Sun.”

Zeshald smiled with the corners of his eyes (a barely noticeable smile) and stroked Sun’s hair with the back of his hand. She was a girl with distinctive white eyes framed by the white hair, which was the feature of a powerless person. She lived in one of the villages of the powerless that were scattered in the area, called Rufk.

Because the strength difference between the ability users and the powerless was so desperately evident, it has become an absolute identification of social status. Depending on the country powerless people were either considered to be of low status or not even treated as humans at all.

There were no divine arts users interested in the constantly oppressed powerless people, aside from jokes and charity. Zeshald, who lived in the village of the powerless, shared the same outlook of living in the villages and freely used his divine healing arts to help them, was truly an eccentric.

Thus Sun, even if he was a divine arts using doctor, even if he was just one person, respected Zeshald.

“Then, I’m off to replace the offerings.”

“Be careful.”

Zeshald saw off Sun, who headed towards the small shrine. He then sat looking towards the Rufk village while skimming through the newly obtained books related to the [God of Calamity]. The books that he has studied until now contained the common knowledge about the Evil God: [The Evil God brought about the calamity upon the world and then disappeared].

“Hmm, the same thing is written in this book… After all the kinds of infectious diseases are noticeable, eh?”

Besides being a village doctor in Rufk, Zeshald also performed research related to the

shrines of the powerless. In fact, the original reason why he started to live in the village of the powerless was so that he could study the rustic lifestyle of the people that have not received the blessing and could not use the divine arts, whose ingenuity and effort left a deep impression on him.

In the cities of divine arts users, if it was a job of crafting simple jewelry or to build a splendid house, the work was done by the divine arts users. There were almost no jobs for people that were not craftsmen. Products and structures that were the result of persons mastery in divine arts could be seen everywhere.

Yet, in the villages of the powerless, if one house needed to be built, entire village worked together to build it. From cutting the lumber and preparing the base to completing the door and the roof, the people that had the skills and experience, while teaching those who wanted learn the work, worked together to complete the building.

Zeshald, recognizing this lifestyle of the mutual support and cooperation and having obtained the said experience and skills, did not think that the small temples and old legends of the powerless carried no meaning that had to be left for the future.

"If I had to guess from the description and period of last calamity… It should be between the fifth day and the tenth day of the fire month of Shalnar. Today is the 11 day, eh?"

There was a fair amount of rumors floating around in the cities regarding the 300 year period of the calamity. But the atmosphere was calm and in no way resembled that of a preparation for upcoming calamity. One could usually hear these rumors as a small talk while drinking alcohol.

"…? There are more birds around than usual?"

Inadvertently raising his eyes at the sky above the forest Zeshald startled after sensing something resembling a divine power similar to the one that he wielded himself.

"Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained."

He glanced again at the flocks of birds circling around the forest, stopped his work, and started to walk towards the small shrine.

Chapter 2: Black hair

With a faint sound a bundle of flowers fell down at the girl's feet. Rara fruits followed, falling on the flowers and rolling away. In her widely opened white eyes a reflection of a man, waving his hands while muttering something, could be seen. The girl ran away, screaming, her face frozen in fear.

"Ah, wait a bit…"

Having reached the exit of the structure that housed the stone room, Yuusuke met a girl with pure white hair… and that girl ran away…screaming…

"Even though I just wanted to talk to her…?"

He felt slightly perplexed while picking up the bundle of flowers and the fruit like things that she dropped. They looked identical to the offerings in the stone room.

"So that girl came here to bring offerings, eh?"

"She didn't mistake me with the demon that was offered this robe, did she?" thought Yuusuke after remembering the ominous statue. He was slightly worried about his looks, but, at the very least, he did not look like the human-monster statue at the altar. "Maybe I just looked like a suspicious person?"

"Uhm"

Yuusuke groaned while checking out his surroundings. It was a quiet place, surrounded by somewhat tall trees. The trees grew so dense that the forest itself became dark and the other side of the forest was not visible.

It looked like the structure with the stone room was located in a small clearing surrounded by the forest. Somehow it looked austere and carried a feeling similar to the grounds of a Shinto shrine. A small path, looking more like an animal trail, continued in between the trees in the direction that the girl ran to.

"Shall I try going there?"

After deciding that there is no point in remaining here, Yuusuke started walking down the small path. Thrown out at some unknown place by a sudden supernatural phenomenon he was currently in the middle of another abnormal situation and was unable to talk to anyone that could explain anything to him.

Because a girl, looking more like a child, has come here alone earlier, he expected that this place would not be dangerous.

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"Teacher! Teacher Zeshald!!"

"Hmm?"

Zeshald, walking on the small path towards the shrine, could not comprehend the appearance of Sun, who was running out of the forest.

She ran as if she was being pursued by someone, jumped at Zeshald, and clung to his arm. As Zeshald stroked Sun's hair to calm her he asked if she got in trouble with ruffians from the city again.

"What happened?"

"Teacher! An Evil god… A black Evil god has walked out of the shrine!"

"… Evil god, you say?"

Thinking of what might have happened, Zeshald raised his eyes towards the path, leading into the forest, to examine the figure of the man that appeared on it.

"Black… you don't say?"

With shaking shoulders the scared girl turned around to look and, after confirming the presence of a [person with the black hair], hid herself behind Zeshald's back. Divine arts users, people able to use the divine arts, had their hair and pupils colored after the God that they have received their blessing from.

The [fire arts users] had received the blessings of the Fire god Volnar and carried the red color.

The [water arts users] had received the blessings of the Water god Shalnar and carried the blue color.

The [earth arts users] had received the blessings of the Earth god Zalnar and carried the yellow color.

The [wind arts users] had received the blessings of the Wind god Fyolnar and carried the green color.

The [powerless] that have not received the blessing from any of the four great Gods carried the white color. The [black] was the color of [calamity] used to portray the Evil god. Therefore the Evil god statues in the shrines of the powerless were consequently painted black and there might have been those that wanted to partly undertake that image.

At least Zeshald has not seen a person with black hair or pupils once during his long 52 years, including over 30 years that he has spent traveling around various countries, researching the Evil god.

Activating the divine art that he possessed, Zeshald walked slightly forward in order to protect sun from the person with the black hair.

"You, Who are you?"

Yuusuke hesitated how to answer the alert looking elderly person, protecting the girl from before behind his back and, without a trace of fear on his face, asked him to identify himself. He showed no hostility but it was hard to say if he was a friend.

"Uhmmm, my name is Tagami Yuusuke, I'm a Japanese. Say, do you even understand what I am saying?"

“Yes, we are both speaking the same language. Your name is [Tagami Yuusuke], right? And [Japanese], is that the name of your tribe?”

The man, who questioned Yuusuke and spoke the same language, seemed to prefer communication over force. After explaining the name of “Japan”, Yuusuke talked about the mysterious things that have happened to his body.

He talked about the call of the [voice], followed by appearing in a completely unknown place and recovering his consciousness in the temple afterwards. Yuusuke voiced his worry that, if a normal person (NOTE: most likely a normal person in present day Japan) would to hear this, he would think of Yuusuke as a delusional madman – none of that brought smile on Zeshald’s face.

[“Tagami Yuusuke… a man that appeared from the shrine of the Godless might actually be the Evil god himself. Even more so he says that he has been called from another world“]

“Your story is very interesting indeed, but the Evil god…”

“Ah, I lived amongst normal humans”

“Mm, but you were even called the Evil god?”

“No! That is … Only the voice said THAT. I am really just a normal person”

Sun was hiding behind old man’s back during the entire conversation between Yuusuke and Zeshald.

“Then, did you really bring the calamity upon this world?”

“Rather, I want to say that I am the one that has experienced the calamity…”

After hearing Yuusuke’s story and deciding that he is not a dangerous person, Zeshald decided to accompany the young man until the Rufk village. Sun was visibly pale and her head was shaking thus Zeshald had convinced her by saying “This man is not dangerous” and persuaded her to return the village ahead of them.

While walking on the country road back to the village, they talked about why Yuusuke was called an Evil god and why Zeshald thought he could bring about a calamity. Despite talking all the way the discussion yielded more questions than answers.

“There are illnesses, we can’t cure. If the contagion spreads we call it a calamity”

“You seem to be perfectly healthy“

Normally unsociable Yuusuke has found an unusual subject of interest and has opened his heart while discussing it with Zeshald. His partner, after all, was a friendly and reasonable old fellow which gave Yuusuke a sense of security.

Zeshald openheartedly talked with Yuusuke, who, despite being thrown alone into an unfamiliar land, was not at loss and acted calm from the beginning, on the outside, but on the inside he was careful as to not get carried away and lower his guard.

“Still, these clothes… can you do something to make them look longer?”

Yuusuke sighed from the embarrassment of looking like a person from ancient times while wearing the clothes that were left as an offering. As for (looking at) Zeshald's clothes, he was wearing loose fitting pants, made from thick cloth that were tucked into brown boots. Above waist he was wearing comfortable looking white shirt covered by a cloak that looked more like a mantle.

The clothes looked like those that a noble from the medieval ages would wear in western countries yet they felt [ordinary]. Walking behind such man while dressed as a person from the ancient times felt somewhat embarrassing indeed.

"If I could at least wear ordinary pants and a shirt…"

Yuusuke said that as he was gripping his clothes, but then he suddenly stopped. After sensing that Zeshald, who was walking 2-3 steps ahead of Yuusuke, turned around. After seeing the youth standing dumbfounded and staring at something Zeshald became even more wary.

"What happened?"

"I… Am I dreaming…"

"Hoho, then are we the people, living inside your dream?"

Yuusuke calmly received Zeshald's candid reply as he continued to stare dumbfounded at something in front of him. Or, to be more precise, it was an image. In front of his eyes was a wireframe image that contained a menu with a simple layout.

It was the [Item Creation – Customization System] menu – a special feature of the game, he was playing just before being called by the mysterious voice. In the customization window Yuusuke saw a spinning 3d model of the garment he was now wearing.

Then Yuusuke recalled something.

"Oh, that's it! The chime back then was the sound you heard when you touched a customizable item in that game"

Zeshald tilted his head while watching Yuusuke talking to himself.

"Hmm I can't understand half of what you're saying. Have you remembered something?"

"Ah, please give me a moment"

While looking at the bewildered Zeshald, Yuusuke processed the item in the menu, he alone could see.

He roughly customized the color and shape of the clothes. There were other sliders for abilities and parameters of the item, but Yuusuke operated only the necessary sliders. One by one, almost identically to that game, he could fine-tune every property of the item.

["There are no customization points, does that mean I can tamper with the item as much as I want? Isn't this cheating?"]

With his eyes focused on something invisible, mumbling unknown words while moving his finger in the air, Yuusuke looked very suspicious, still, Zeshald felt a power resembling that of a divine art, emanating from the young man.

“What are you doing, Tagami Yuusuke?”

Because the offered clothes had plenty of cloth, Yuusuke has split them into a shirt and a pair of pants and then changed their form respectively. In the game players could remodel clothing, sold by the NPC, the way they liked and could have their characters wear it.

Incidentally he also made some underwear. Being unable to decide on the position (NOTE: i guess item equip slot for underwear) he couldn’t settle down.

“Ok, this should do it. …… Execute!”

Being engrossed in the customization screen, Yuusuke, afraid this was just a dream, hesitated for a moment, but, having decided that waking up if nothing happens wouldn’t be such a bad thing, he pressed the “Execute” button on the screen.

Yuusuke got surrounded by a warm light.

“?!”

“Hey, You! …”

The offered cloth transformed to a gray shirt, a pair of black pants, and green briefs.

“Kyaaaaaaa!!”

Girl’s shriek resounded the moment the light disappeared. Sun, with her white hair fluttering in the wind, ran away while covering her face, red from the shame. The moment that light enveloped Yuusuke, Sun, being worried, came back to look for Zeshald. She was staring at the light looking for the symbol of the Evil god…

“Ah….”

“She ran away screaming again”, sighed Yuusuke, standing in the middle of the county road, surrounded by abundant greenery.

“Ah, right. If you customize the equipment, you are wearing, it gets unequipped in the process. Hahahaha…”

Zeshald, having witnessed power on par with divine arts, asked Yuusuke, who, laughing an emotionless laugh, was slowly gathering the scattered clothes from the ground… In the meantime Sun was running back to the village.

“What was it just now? I haven’t heard of a divine art that allows you to instantaneously remodel clothes”

“Divine art?”

Zeshald was now even more convinced that the youth, who has turned his head sideways in confusion, was not a person of this world. He has intended to only lead him

to the village, but, after talking with him about the customs of this world, he decided to allow him to calm down in the village and then listen to his story in detail.

“Hmm, what should I teach you first?”

Chapter 3: Life in Rufk village

"That's Rufk village"

Zeshald pointed down the road where wooden shacks were lined up in a chaotic way. It was a reasonably sized village that had around 240 villagers living in 60 houses. On the other side of the village huge plains stretched to the horizon.

"The powerless live there, right?"

"Yeah. Maybe I didn't tell you earlier, but I am a user of water divine arts and also a doctor in this village"

"Not being the ruler of the village, talking to and teaching the powerless people, not to mention living with them, was very uncommon", on their way to the village Zeshald once again explained to Yuusuke about the depth of the difference between divine arts users and powerless people.

The majority of people have received divine protection from the Four Great Gods, who have created the world. These people called themselves divine arts users and could use abilities, called divine arts. Those with power ruled over this land, and that rule extended to every corner of the world.

People that could not use the divine arts were in the minority and were seen as little more than cattle.

"How cruel can you be to view people as cattle?"

"It's because of the difference in power between them"

With the divinity of the Four as the main system ruling this world, the divine arts users had their social status clearly distinguished by their abilities. They even decided on the restrictions on who could live in the same city. Fire users were considered high status divine arts users and held the highest social position in this world, water and earth arts users were the middle class while the wind users belonged to the lowest class.

"Basically it's a system where those with the strongest military power reign over the rest"

"I see"

Although common sense of Kaltcio was still a mystery to Yuusuke, thanks to the Zeshald's lecture, he at least managed to smoothly remember everything he was taught about the social structure of this world.

"Since you now have a rough understanding of it, you will be able to learn the rest while living with us"

"Thank you for everything"

Thus Yuusuke, being suddenly called out to this world, has discovered that he was given a power to customize things he touched. As Yuusuke still could not tell left from right in this world, he was currently living in Zeshald's house under his care.

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The village was surrounded by a trench that seemed to be about 1 meter wide and 1 meter deep which was dug up to protect the grain warehouse from the wild animals. At the entrance to the village a log bridge was built over the trench.

Because there were no dangerous animals or evil beast species in this region, villages tended to surround themselves with moats instead of building a wall. Moreover branches from a special kind of tree, containing flammable resins, were laid on the bottom of the trench. In time of need it could be ignited to create a wall of fire.

Rufk villagers lived by hunting, fishing in the nearby river, and gathering fruits from the trees in the forest. Sometimes they traded their crop with the neighboring village and sold the fur and wool, gathered from the livestock, in the big city which was the capital of this region.

The villagers who saw Yuusuke were not used to the black hair of his and were visibly startled the moment they saw him. That said, none of the visitors that came to Zeshald's place caused any problems and their expression softened after a few moments. This clearly showed Yuusuke how highly Zeshald was regarded in the village.

"Teacher Zeshald… and the evil god guy…"

"I'm Tagami Yuusuke"

Sun came home and, after seeing Yuusuke immediately hid herself behind the door. She worked as a maid in Zeshald's house and, despite being openly cautious of Yuusuke, had prepared the guest room.

"Haha if he is really that scary, then why did you work here today?"

"I didn't have anything else to do~"

For the time being Zeshald asked sun to prepare a water basin. Since Yuusuke came all the way here barefooted, his feet were covered by scratches. Zeshald planned to wash the dirt of Yuusuke's feet and then heal them.

"I will give you my shoes, although they might not fit you"

"I think I can change their size so it will not be a problem"

Yuusuke sat at the chair that was offered for him and inspected the soles of his feet. There were some traces of dirt and small pebbles. Although there were no blisters, he saw some bruises. ["Ouch~"] he thought. In the meantime Sun returned with the water.

"Ah, … thank you"

"……"

Sun, whose white hair was tied on the back, looked to be quite muscular for her slender build. She put the basin and the wooden bucket with water at Yuusuke's feet and coyly started washing Yuusuke's feet.

Feeling like he was in a scene of a television show or a movie, Yuusuke, startled, drew back his legs. After rethinking on the common knowledge of this world he understood that drawing back one's legs here might have seemed rude.

Slightly ashamed he endured the tickling feeling. For a while only the sound of the water could be heard.

"I'm done, Teacher"

After washing Yuusuke's feet and reporting it to Zeshald, Sun took the basin, filled with dirty water, and the wooden bucket and went outside to dispose of the water. At the same time Zeshald has come out of the inner room where he left his luggage and prepared a pair of boots.

"Umm, let me see"

He put the slightly dusty pair of brown boots aside and inspected the state of Yuusuke's feet. Then, by merely concentrating a bit, he healed the small wounds and made the bruises on Yuusuke's legs disappear.

"How does it feel?"

"Amazing, you healed them completely!"

The prickling pain he felt has also completely disappeared. After inspecting the soles of his feet again Yuusuke found them to be beautiful and smooth. Yuusuke could only admire the power of healing divine arts which looked like magic to him.

"I see that divine arts are effective on you"

"Ah, it seems so. So there was a possibility that they would not work?"

Zeshald nodded intelligently to Yuusuke's question. In his mind Zeshald was relieved that the divine arts of this world could interfere with Yuusuke. This way, if Yuusuke proved to be Evil god, the divine arts users would be able to fight him.

["Well, he does not look like a dangerous man"]

With Zeshald's thoughts being concentrated somewhere else, Yuusuke touched the boots and, after confirming chime sound, immediately started customizing them.

***

Carrying a bundle of field flowers and a basket of rara fruits she was walking alongside her father at a steady pace. From time to time she looked at her father and asked a question, to which he answered while smiling. They were bringing the offering to the temple as usual, then, suddenly, her father stopped.

Thinking of what may have happened, she looked towards the road and saw a green haired man standing alongside a yellow haired man.

Divine art users! The instant she thought that her father pushed her away into the thicket that grew alongside road. She fell down and the flowers scattered in the air, creating a red cloud. The first thing she saw after getting out of the bushes was her

father's body, lying in a pool of blood.

When she yelled her father's name and started rushing towards him, the ground below her feet rose suddenly and she was attacked by the soil. She understood what happened and started struggling frantically, but she was hit into stomach by a cold, blunt thing which was soon followed by a burning pain.

Both divine arts users were laughing. The strength left her body, she could see something red flowing out of her abdomen as she understood ["ah, I'm dying"]. Suddenly the soil, that she was trapped in crumbled. Her body fell down as it had no strength left.

On the road she could see a blue haired person running towards her. She knew that person. He was a divine arts user. However, that person was …

"……!"

Dazzling morning sun and chirping melody of small birds have erased the lingering thoughts of a bad dream of the past. Sun rose abruptly after releasing a sigh of relief. It was a nightmare of the past that she has not seen for a long time.

"It's definitely because of the evil god"

After sighing again Sun got out of the bed.

***

"Good morning teacher! … and Yusuke…"

"Mmm, Good morning, Sun"

"Morning~"

When Sun arrived at the dining room, a series of fabrics, clothes, and shoes, Zeshald and Yuusuke were shuffling through, were lined up on the table. "You might be able to disguise as a tailor", suggested Zeshald, to which Yuusuke replied with "You might be right".

"Ok, Execute"

After playing around with his finger in the air Yuusuke said those words and seemed to push something. Fabrics and a pair of old boots, scattered on the table, were enveloped in light and changed into clothes of elaborate design and brand new pair of lacquered boots, which only divine arts users could make.

Yuusuke, who said to be from another world, carried the divine arts of the Evil god. He called his power "Customization – Creation".

After feeling someone looking at him, Yuusuke suddenly raised his head and his eyes met with Sun's. At that instant Sun hurriedly left the room. Since few days have passed since Yuusuke came to this word and since he got familiar with the life in this village, Yuusuke sometimes held small talks with the villagers. Yet, sadly he could not yet reach Sun's heart.

Yuusuke sighed. Zeshald, after confirming that Sun has indeed left the house, broke the silence.

"Please don't blame her. That child is burdened with an ominous past"

After saying that he closed one eye and put his index finger to his lips while saying "It's a secret". Afterwards he told Yuusuke about the trauma, Sun has experienced in her childhood

***

"Oh, Sun, is it alright to skip going to the teachers place today"

"Aunt Bahana… Uhm, teacher looked busy researching Yuusuke's divine arts…"

Sun replied to the gentle voice of her neighbor, while on her way to the forest to harvest fruits. Aunt Bahana was a beautiful young woman who was a neighbor of sun when she lived with her father. She knew Sun since she was a child and often worried about her future.

Bahana has also lost her husband recently. While officially it was said to be an accident during the hunt, she knew that he was actually killed by divine arts user just for the fun of it. Because of this she could understand the pain that Sun was feeling after losing her father on the whim of divine arts users – Sun had a trauma related to the young male divine arts users.

"You still didn't get used to him?"

"… … I understand that he is a good person, but … I just can't help but fear him"

Sun understood that the attitude and feelings she showed towards Yuusuke were her problem, however, the fear of the ability users, engraved in her childhood, could not be easily erased even if Zeshald told her that Yuusuke did not seem to be a divine arts user.

Still, that power looked like divine arts to Sun. Thus to Sun he was a divine arts user from another world that has appeared in a shrine of the Evil god. In this world he was called an Evil god and the Powerless were sometimes ridiculed as Evil god divine arts users. (NOTE: last sentence of this paragraph sounds way too random..)

"Hey, don't be in such a rush! Why don't you try talking with him just a little?"

"Uhm…"

Sun got herself to greet him in the morning. If she continues on she might get to the point where she can act normally around him.

["Next time, I might try asking him about the flavor of the food"]

***

While Sun was gathering fruits in the forest and chatting with her neighbor, in Zeshald's house, Yuusuke groaned, listening to the girls past as it was told by the old man. Even if he understood the common knowledge of this world, relationship between the divine

arts users and the powerless did not sit well with him.

“What happened to those two?”

“I killed one of them, but the wind user managed to get away”

Even now I can hear stories in the village about the time when there was no divine art user who was supposed to watch several villages of the Powerless in the area.

There were cases where the powerless, who had no lord to watch over them, were treated as wild animals. There were cases like Sun’s in between the young divine arts users, who have just obtained their power and wanted to test in onto those with no protection for the sake of testing out their power or purely for their enjoyment.

The young divine arts users that attacked Sun and her father, upon seeing Zeshald, rushing their way, assumed that they have damaged his property without his approval.

While water arts user Zeshald belonged to the same hierarchical level as the earth arts user, it was assumed that, between the God of earth Zalnar and the God of water Shalnar, the latter was stronger and thus the water arts users had higher social standing than their earth arts counterparts. Meanwhile, wind art users belonged to the lowest social caste of the divine arts users.

When killing of the property of the divine arts user of a higher social standing was concerned, the decision at the divine arts users’ trial was clear. Theft warranted capital punishment and court, on top of seizing the assets, could strip the accused of his social status and turn him into a slave. Threatened by these consequences the two attempted to kill Zeshald.

Despite Zeshald’s divine arts belonging to the healing type, his mastery of the arts allowed him to reverse the effect and use it to damage the flesh.

“While I needed a bit of time to strangle the blood vessels of the earth arts user, the wind arts user, known for his extreme mobility and ability to transmit information, managed to escape”

“The way you describe it is scary…”

Yuusuke was angry while listening to the cruel story. He was feeling that he could not tolerate groups of such people no matter which world he came from.

“Were there any groups of such people in the world you came from?”

“Well, there were some odd fellows, but no one would even think about treating another human as an animal”

Even thou there were some extreme cases, the world Yuusuke talked about tended to hold respect towards human rights and these rights were respected in almost every country. After hearing this Zeshald nodded, saying “It’s a good place” with his face full of various emotions.

***

“It became quite a long talk”

After shuffling through the luggage, lying on the table, for a short while, Zeshald started to separate things he wanted to sell in the city. Yuusuke, who helped Zeshald to pack up, dropped a green object from the opening of a sturdy bag, lying on the chair.

The thing that fell under the chair was a long cylinder. Wondering what it might be Yuusuke picked the cylinder up.

Ding dong.

It was a crystal-like transparent object. Crystal's length was about the same as Yuusuke's index finger and its thickness was around 3mm. It looked similar to a hexagon pencil that was flat at the both ends.

"Mhm? aaah it's a shouka [sparkling crystal]. This bag is my purse"

[Shouka] was the name for the currency, made from a very hard cylinder shaped substance. Shouka was used throughout Kaltcio and was created by the combined efforts of fire and earth divine arts users. It was said to be produced by condensing light, thou the exact manufacturing process was kept secret.

Capital of this country and also the biggest city in Kaltcio was called Sanc Adiet. The minting of shouka there was overseen by a reigning family of fire arts users, also known as nobility of this city.

There were four kinds of shouka, named after the Four (great gods), which value was determined by the color of the crystal – one red Volnar shouka was worth 5 blue Shalnar shoukas, 10 yellow Zalnar shoukas, or 30 green Fyolnar shoukas.

"It sounds complex…"

"Hohoho, you should remember this well in the future"

Yuusuke took a transparent Fyolnar shouka and held it against the light. When he touched the crystal he heard the usual chime thus thinking ["I should be able to tamper with it, right"] Yuusuke opened the customization menu.

Yuusuke then took the only Volnar shouka out of the purse and, after comparing it's parameters with the Fyolnar shouka, decided that, aside from a single parameter, the remainder of their structure was identical.

However shoukas of the same kind still had subtle differences in their parameters therefore he might be allowed a certain degree of error. This meant that there was no precision instrument used in the manufacturing process.

"… Execute"

The Fyolnar crystal, Yuusuke held in his hands, was enveloped by light. After the light has conceded, what Yuusuke held was a translucent Volnar shouka.

"Hey, wait a second!"

with a loud sound Zeshald stood up from his chair and hurriedly looked around. There was no one in the room aside from Zeshald and Yuusuke. Meanwhile Yuusuke hid the customized Volnar shouka asking "Did I do something bad?".

The customized shouka was indeed genuine. One could not tell the forged one apart from the usual one, created by high ranking fire and earth divine arts users. The appraisal skills of earth divine arts users could not be deceived, still, this did not seem to be a fluke and was indeed a genuine Volnar crystal.

"… Ok, Yuusuke~ Don't tell or show anyone what you did just now. By the way, I have 8 more Fyolnar crystals over here~~~"

It was early afternoon and 8 Fyolnar crystals have mysteriously disappeared from Zeshald's purse, incidentally the amount of Volnar crystals have increased by the same amount.

How it happened was indeed a mystery.

Chapter 4: Sanc Adiet

Widest plains on Kaltcio, the Fonclanc plains, or, to be precise, one fifth of these plains were occupied by a gigantic city of Sanc Adiet. The city was controlled by the strongest fire divine arts users who, over the ages, became royalty. For generations this city was the capital of the country.

The city functioned under a caste system and every citizen knew the limits of his caste – those with stronger divine arts were allowed to live in the quarters in the upper districts of the city as to boast of their power. The palace, where the royalty lived, was a 10 floor building. Its structure and walls below the 5th floor were reinforced with the divine arts.

The central district that was limited to the powerful divine arts users [the highborn] was surrounded by a huge defensive wall. Thus, having no place to expand, inhabitants built taller and taller buildings to accommodate themselves. Behind these walls the middleclass district surrounded the highborn section, followed by the district of the lowest class.

The middleclass district, just like the highborn district, was distinguished by the structures that were higher than the ones of the lowest class district as to overlook the area below. The lowest class district was also situated higher than the ground – as the city expanded, stone pavement was laid out to accommodate new structures.

Basically, the buildings got higher towards the center of the city and, after a period of reckless development, the city took an oval shape when looked at from above. On the city outskirts there was a district for the powerless who were exceptionally allowed to live there. From the perspective of the powerless caste, that in itself was a blessing.

On the summit of the highborn district stood the Volance palace. The palace was rebuilt along with the city each time becoming higher and higher. The current palace retained no architecture of the old times, which was now buried underneath the stone pavement and looked like some sort of underground labyrinth.

The wall and roofs, neighboring the top floor of the palace, were adorned with the same light absorbing material that was used in the production of shouka, enveloping the palace in radiance.

In a room on the top floor of this palace, a bored looking girl, wearing a high class red dress, was sitting with her legs thrown back on a couch, made by a highly skilled divine arts artisan. She threw a book, she was skimming through, on the table.

"Boring~. I AM BORED!"

"Princess, you are being improper."

Rebuked aide of the personal bodyguard and education department, to whom such behavior of this immodest young princess, outrageously crossing her hands behind her head and rocking back and forth while sitting cross-legged on the chair, was a problem he worried about every day.

"Stop it! A lady cannot behave like this!"

"Not like anyone cares, no one can see me here either."

Personal aide Krielov walked up to the princess of the divine fire arts users, Violet Volance, who was rocking in the chair being bored out of her mind, and held the back of the seat before the princess fell down.

"Mhmmmm~"

"No Mhms! You should act more like the royalty."

"Grand and glorious shining example, standing at the top of divine fire arts users", Violet, who was scolded as usual, muttered boredly while playing with her nail and ignoring the preaching:

"Father and the bureaucrats that surround him are all black inside, quite like the statue of the Evil god."

"The statue of the evil god?"

"The black statue enshrined in the powerless shrines."

"Princess, you should not speak of noble descendants of the fire god as those of such low birth."

As she was started to be scolded again, Violet rested her bored face by placing her chin on her hand and said something that caused even more wrinkles to appear on Krielov's forehead.

"I want to meet Zeshald."

"……"

Glancing at frowning Krielov, Violet purposely mentioned Zeshald. Zeshald has not visited the palace for several years, but, when Violet was an infant, he used to play with her.

"You should not mention that weirdo."

"Why shouldn't I? I heard that Zeshald's mastery of divine water arts outperforms even the elite of the palace, the [Water god corps]."

Beside [Divine soldier corps], soldiers tasked by the palace to defend and patrol the city, there was an elite group, responsible for tasks related with palace officials. [Water god corps] was an elite group, comprised of elites of the divine healing type water arts. Incidentally Krielov was the commanding officer of the [Fire god corps] – an elite group of fire arts users, responsible for the safety of the royalty.

"Princess, hearing you speak such things people might misunderstand it for favoritism. That will only cause trouble for him."

"Ugh… Zeshald is not that weak of a person."

Replied Violet, forming her lips into a sulking expression.

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“Teacher is leaving for the city? Is he going along?”

“Yes, Yuusuke will also be going with teacher. They will be out for 3 days.”

Sun was at Bahana’s house with a basket full of rara fruits. While exchanging the fruit for some dried meat they were having a small talk.

The fruits that Sun brought were customized by Yuusuke and had a special flavor. Also they were not soft as ripe rara fruits so one could feel the soft texture when eating them. That made them extremely popular amongst the villagers.

“Is that so? Then go home, it’s nearly dinnertime.”

“Mmm, thank you.”

Bahama treated Sun as her own daughter. Seeing the girl act as usual aunt Bahana sighed inside: “It seems this child is still ways off from talking about romance”.

***

“Yes, it’s comfortable.”

Due to Yuusuke’s customization riding a wagon on the main road to the city was pleasant. If you went directly through the main road by the wagon, it took an entire day to get to Sanc Adiet from Rufk village.

By leaving early in the morning it was possible to arrive to the capital late in the evening. Before the road, stretching into the horizon, a growing beige city skyline could be seen.

“At first I thought that there was a mountain on the horizon.”

“Hoho, well there isn’t much of a difference.”

Zeshald, sitting on the driver’s seat, was explaining to Yuusuke, who was riding in the back of the wagon, about Sanc Adiet. The city expanded when its population increased. To be able to see every nook of the city the king has raised the elevation of the highborn district forming the shape that the city had now.

“Then, is the old city is buried beneath the current city?”

“Hmmmm~”

Yuusuke having showed interest in history, Zeshald nodded happily to a remark of a person, sharing his interests.

Horse was running tirelessly thanks to Zeshald’s water arts. This improved the traveling comfort and maneuverability of the wagon up to that of an average high class carriage. Yuusuke and Zeshald were able to travel almost without any rest and arrived to the city ahead of their schedule.

“Uhm, street (stall) market might still be open. Do you want to go for a short walk?”

After parking the wagon on an empty spot they employed a local powerless to guard it. Powerless here usually earned their coin by guarding horses or wagons of traders that

came to the city. Powerless considered it an honor to be allowed to live in the vicinities of the city.

“Eeeeh! M-mister, WHAT is that?”

“AH, sorry, but currently I only have these on me.”

“……”

Zeshald shrugged his shoulders towards a local powerless, confused that the yellow shouka he was given, was not a mistake.

For the wagon guard duty a single green shouka alone was enough of a compensation, yet, because all the green shoukas that Zeshald had in his purse had changed to the red ones, the smallest amount of money Zeshald had was a yellow Zalnar shouka. Having received more than thrice his usual play, the local powerless, screaming from joy, assumed his guard duties.

“His scream was quite something, eh?”

“That’s because for them it is quite a lot of money.”

Zeshald answered Yuusuke, who was glimpsing [at the local] from under the hood that fell low enough to hide his eyes. The hooded cloak was prepared to cover Yuusuke’s hair because dying ones hair or using a wig of different color was a taboo in this society.

Divine arts users, being able to feel the power of another user were able to use this for discrimination. Yuusuke, whose power carried a different feeling (atmosphere) around him, considered his choices to avoid the uncomfortable gazes from other people. Being near Zeshald and pretending to be his apprentice was both, convenient and simple idea.

In the evening Zeshald and Yuusuke went out to walk around the city to search around for some things they had to buy at the stalls of the central street. The street stall market was a famous aspect of the lower district. Adding to the size of Sanc Adiet, one could find every kind of item you could imagine in this market. It was a place where businesses of scores of people flourished every day.

In the lower district citizens were allowed to keep the stalls up until sunset for free. However, if they wanted to set up their shop in the middle class or highborn district they were required to purchase a store permit.

Arriving at the highborn district, almost all of the clothes and adornments were custom made. Even entering a restaurant without formal attire was not permitted.

“Will you sell your wares here?”

“Yeah, an acquaintance of mine has a shop further up the road. He was interested in it after hearing about you.”

Tomorrow morning after securing the stall the two planned to sell shoes, clothes, and animal products, such as wool. After obtaining the money they thought about buying the everyday commodities and heading back to the village.

Zeshald who was looking for a pottery stall to replace a plate, Sun broke some time ago, suddenly sensing a presence of a powerful divine arts user looked to the other side of the street.

"Is something wrong?"

"Mhm…"

Yuusuke also stopped and looked the same way. Suddenly the crowd parted and a group of people, wearing brightly decorated armor, appeared. They were [Divine soldiers], that he saw several times near the city gates. It was a proud group, tasked with protecting public order and had a unique atmosphere around them.

"What is that?"

"A member of royalty with his retainers has come down incognito from the palace."

"Incognito?"

"The procession stands out so much, I don't understand what ["incognito"] means here." – Yuusuke replied ignorantly. After hearing Yuusuke's comment Zeshald nodded, saying "I see" and explained Yuusuke what "traveling incognito" meant in this world.

Divine arts users could feel the presence of other divine arts users. Since some time ago royalty have used their powers throughout the kingdom during events and festivals, thus everyone in this city knew the aura that they carried. Thus if one would disguise himself and come down into the city, he would be detected immediately.

While it was possible for palace officials or someone not so well known to travel according to Yuusuke's understanding of "incognito", for the royalty, who used their power to command respect from the lower classes, hiding their presence like that was impossible.

For that reason it has become a norm for royal family to be surrounded by palace soldiers when they wanted to travel "incognito" to sightsee, have fun, or check the wellbeing or obedience of the common divine arts users.

"Well, royalty rarely goes down to the city… ….. This is bad!"

While Zeshald was telling Yuusuke this, his face suddenly became worried as he recognized something. He looked to Yuusuke and said:

"We have to leave this place quickly"

"Wh- what? What's with all the urgency?"

***

"Princess, it's about time we returned to the palace."

"You are saying boring things again. Look, the city is still busy."

Violet, walking 'incognito' around the city, accompanied by her close aid and several retainers, was looking around the stalls lined along the central street. While looking

around for interesting trinkets for the lower classes she suddenly felt a nostalgic aura. Stopping instantly she looked around.

“That is… !”

Violet broke out of the circle her aide and retainers have formed around her, confusing them by her sudden halt, and disappeared into the crowd. Her aide, Krielov, was momentarily befuddled by her sudden action but soon regained his composure and rushed after the princess.

“Found you, Zeshald!”

“Ugh…”

“Whoa, what!”

Yuusuke, who was hurriedly trying to leave this place as he was urged by Zeshald to get away from the street, was surprised by a young girl that suddenly tackled Zeshald on the waist. She looked to be strong willed, had her red hair bound into twin tails, and wore an expensive, open, crimson dress.

“Princess, please be gentler with the elderly.”

“You are saying that yet you are always out wandering somewhere around the world.”

Attendant Krielov of the [Fire gods corps], having finally caught up to the princess, recognized Zeshald and set a cold face.

Krielov did not like Zeshald. Currently ruling Esvobus Volance, the admired [Crimson wall king], which Krielov serves, was a good friend of Zeshald, but currently, because of the circumstances, their relationship was complicated.

“Do not involve yourselves with Zeshald.”, said king Esvobus, seeming like he was not telling something.

For king Esvobus, a fire art user of great strength, to show favoritism like that made his faithful retainers, including Krielov, harbor displeasure towards Zeshald. Thinking “Might it be that Zeshald is some sort of weakness of the king?” Krielov asked the princess to “Return to the palace” while politely excusing himself. Soldiers of Fire god corps, guessing the intent of their commanding officer, surrounded the princess with a guard ring as per their duty.

“Isn’t it sunset already? Your father will get worried if you do not return to the palace soon.”

Violet, dissatisfied because she was being treated as granddaughter by Zeshald, suddenly coquettishly changed her facial expression, puffed her cheeks while putting her hands at her hips, got even closer to the old man, and pointed her finger toward his chest.

“I am not a child anymore. You should also know that…”

“Well then what is the secret of why this senile old man has caught her highness’ interest?”

"!! Princess, behavior as such is..!"

In addition to lightly brushing off her close aide's thoughts, Princess Violet, after her seduction attempt failed completely, once again puffed her cheeks with all her might.

"Che, it seems I don't have enough sex appeal."

"It's because the one you are trying to seduce this time is a weak old man…"

Zeshald sheepishly replied to groaning Violet. As Krielov lost his patience and the soldiers of fire god corps silently performed their duty, Yuusuke, being ignored as a total outsider, was standing aside and staring at the soldiers while thinking – "What a tomboyish princess".

"You, you give off a strange aura."

"Wha-?"

Yuusuke, dumbfounded by being spoken to so suddenly, released a strange sound from his mouth. Turning his head back, before his eyes Yuusuke saw a self-confident lady with a well-featured face, and beaming red eyes, full of determination. The princess was walking towards him.

Violet, recognizing an existence that did not immediately separate from Zeshald upon seeing these events, took an interest in the face of the person that emitted the aura of an unknown divine arts that she has never felt before. Luckily her advance was promptly interrupted by Zeshald.

"He is a shy person, if the princess continues to stare at him like that, he will collapse from the stress."

"… Hmm."

Violet squinted her eyes, not the very least interested in Zeshald's protective behavior, compared to the mysterious aura of the hooded divine arts user, snorted, and obediently withdrawn. Seemingly posing she snapped her fingers towards the two.

At that moment, after emitting a crackling sound (a sound of burning), Yuusuke's hood started to burn.

"WHAAAAAT?!"

"Ugh! This is bad."

"Ahahahaha~"

Even thou the flame were quickly doused by Zeshald's water arts, the bystanders were alerted by Violet's usage of the divine arts. The princess, who was laughing out loud, was urged to behave by Krielov, who rushed to her side.

"Princess! Please behave yourself. Royalty's sacred divine arts should not be recklessly used in front of the people of lower castes like this!"

"Leave me alone!"

Yuusuke, almost having his head burnt, interfered in the admonition of the close aid of the reckless tomboyish princess. Interference in a conversation between a royal princess and her close aid was something that was even impossible to conceive for the ability users of the lower castes. This again ignited the princess' interest in Yuusuke as she looked towards him… and froze…

"Gah! What an absurdly unmanageable tomboyish princess."

Yuusuke, standing there speaking without any respect while fording the cape with a burnt hood to perform a customization repair on it later on, noticed sudden lack of the turmoil that was going on just a moment ago.

"Y-You …"

"What do you want?"

"Are you the God of calamity…? Have you come to destroy my country?"

"Eh?"

Yuusuke lost his voice for a moment again. ["Oh boy…"], Zeshald looked towards the sky while covering his brows. Silence that has fallen between the bystanders as the member of the royalty pointed out a [god of calamity] disappeared in an instant.

No matter what, calling someone an evil god was not natural. After all the existence of a "being that brought calamity every 300 years" was directly implied.

"Uhm, the power of the god of calamity … the great calamity…"

"I don't think this is the place were talking nice works."

Krielov, who was right behind Violet, immediately showed why he was the commander of the fire god corps and ordered his troops.

"Arrest those that threaten our lord immediately."

Chapter 5: Zeshald's expectations

["God of calamity?"]

["That's right, it's an incarnation of Calamity that is not a man neither an evil beast"]

Violet was lying in the middle of a huge room, that had the entirety of its floor covered in carpet. She asked this while pointing at a picture of a black evil god in a big picture book that was opened before her. Zeshald answered her question with a smile.

["Will daddy and uncle defeat him?"]

["Only the goodness in the people hearts is able to stand against the god of calamity. "]

["Then I will become a good girl so I could help daddy and uncle"]

["Hohoho, you are a good child, princess"]

"… … It was like that"

"So you had a relationship like that?"

"As a child, princess was an obedient and good" Zeshald told Yuusuke as he was looking at him with a stern face. "The person standing before us now is but a shadow of what she was then". Rather than being composed, the princess simply looked defiant.

The time was just before sunset when the merchants of the main street of the lower district were closing off their stalls for the night. Meanwhile those, working during the night (nightsingers), have started their trade and were mixing with the crowd, looking for their clients. It was a curiously unique time of the day, but today an unusually heavy atmosphere descended on the certain corner of the street.

The onlookers have abruptly stopped their work and gathered around to watch an arrest by the fire god corps. By the way, [nightsingers] was this world's name for prostitutes.

Some of the soldiers of the fire god corps who were pointing their spears at Yuusuke and Zeshald after surrounding them also showed a look of confusion on their faces.

Several years ago during the [festival of creation], which was celebrated on the New Year, king Esvobus has issued an imperial edict to the soldiers of all god corps, saying "Zeshald is not to be concerned with". The nuance of "Don't touch him" was also included in that edict.

Since that day Zeshald has not been to the palace and was living outside of the city in a village of the powerless. Unknown circumstances between the king and Zeshald was the cause of the notion that the king had some sort of weakness in Zeshald.

"What are you doing? Hurry and apprehend these people!"

"B-but, wouldn't that mean disobeying kings orders…?"

"Besides, I believe we do not have a valid reason to apprehend them this time"

The soldiers, anxious from the order of Kreivol, their commanding officer, that

contradicted the imperial decree of the king, were questioning the credibility of this order. This was possible because, unlike the lower rank soldiers, those that were employed by the palace corps had a certain amount of freedom (of thought).

"Don't be concerned by this, I will personally explain (tell) this to my father"

Violet, being in a good mood after having her boredom dispelled by the unexpected meeting, declared an interesting proposal. If the two were caught, they could be brought to the palace. Princess already had her eyes on Zeshald, yet her curiosity was greatly increased by a rude man with black hair that gave off a strange, never before felt aura.

"If her majesty says it like that, the suspicious man said to be a god of calamity… was indeed called to this city to take the life of his highness… … .."

"Hoho.. you guys are only listening to the princess when it is convenient for you"

"Wh.. What did you say?!"

Zeshald, hitting quite close to the target (of raising doubts between soldiers), cmade Kreivol raise his voice. Noticing that Zeshald attempted to take even greater control of this situation and prepared to deal the final blow as he thought of how to explain Yuusuke's existence and power.

"Oh, you are the overly loyal type that causes his lord to die early"

"Wh … wha…?"

"I am saying that I am related to Esvobus… … Would it not be better for you to abide to the Kings orders?"

"What… what is the meaning of this!"

With his attitude having taken a complete turnaround Zeshald spoke to Kreivol in a threatening voice, looking looking him down with a death stare. This in turn made the fire god corps become wary. Zeshald's change of face also made Violet, who was enjoying the event, shudder.

["Teacher, teacher, why are you agitating them?"]

["It's all right, please trust me this time"]

After exchanging a short conversation in secret, Zeshald returned to his serious persona, spread his hands outwards, and spoke to Kreivol, who was unable to hide his irritation and annoyance.

"Esvobus wanted me to stay away from him and you have not heard the reason? Despite that you are inviting me to the palace"

"This is no invitation! There is no way criminals like you would ever get a chance to meet the king!"

"… What about my students? Do you know how many of them work in the palace?"

"… !!"

There were a lot of people in the palace that were taught by Zeshald before. Almost every healing type water arts user, belonging to the elite water god corps, looked up to Zeshald as their teacher. If Zeshald were to be caught and brought to the palace, these retainers would doubtlessly protest and appeal against this decision.

Therefore, could a faithful retainer ignore king's intention of breaking the relationship and distancing Zeshald from himself? Torn between his loyalty and suspicions Kreivol was at loss for words.

"Th… then how will you explain this black haired man?"

"Yuusuke? I wonder …?"

Yuusuke shrugged his head at the sudden change of topic. Violet murmured "So his name is Yuusuke" as to remember the name.

"Don't play dumb! Why did you bring a man, thought to be evil god of calamity, into the city?!"

"Really? I believe that ["evil god of calamity is just the name of the plague"] there is no way the guy over there really is the god of calamity"

After hearing this retort soldiers started looking at each other, "Evil god is just a myth, right?" being bewildered by the unvoiced question. Originally this whole arrest was orchestrated by Violet, who called the black haired Yuusuke a god of calamity.

Kreivol also froze for a moment as he did not believe that the evil god actually existed. The princess has called that man the evil god only as a pretext to apprehend Zeshald.

Having taken control of the place and silenced everyone in confusion, Zeshald started his final push.

"Do you know that if you mix all the colors you obtain black?"

Most of the divine art users could use only single type divine arts. In the very rare cases a divine art user, capable of using two types of divine arts, could be born.

"I think that his hair looks like that because of the effects of the blessing of the four great gods"

"Parents, blessed with such a child, probably also believed him to be the evil god" – continued Zeshald, introducing Yuusuke as a child, abandoned at a shrine of the powerless in a far off land. Until recently he was raised in secret by the villagers of the nearby powerless village and has only recently wandered into the outside world.

Truthfully, Zeshald's flowing speech also persuaded the curious onlookers. "Oh so that's how it is" look could be seen on everyone's faces as they affirmed to old man's finishing remark. Straightening his back and coughing delicately, Zeshald then spoke of the folklore, related to the god of calamity in a majestic tone.

"Why are the evil god statues in the temples of the powerless black? That is the color you get after mixing every other color. It was simply wrongly assumed that the power

of all four gods, imperfectly united in one body, is the symbol of the god of calamity who brings misfortune. This was the conclusion that the powerless came up with after centuries of living without education. In my opinion dyes, affected by dirt and mold, passage of time, and deterioration is the result……"

"Wa – Wait a moment Zeshald. I understand, it was my bad"

Violet was extremely weak to Zeshald's scholar mode. Thus, attempting to stop the migraine inducing flow of words, she hastily accepted her fault. While watching it with widely opened eyes Yuusuke thought that "Violet also has an unexpectedly cute side to her".

In the midst of the confusion an order of the king arrived from the palace, ordering to break up this gathering. Message only said that "any unnecessary actions will be followed up with strict consequences".

"What is this, I was just getting to the good part"

Zeshald said this as he was stroking his chest while thinking "It went well".

"Don't worry about my father. Come to the palace some other time!"

"I will be waiting" – Violet finished while waving her hand as she was returning to the highborn district accompanied by the palace guards and Kreivol.

As it was well past sunset now, onlookers also scattered and started hurriedly tidying up their stalls. A yellow haired man in his prime, who seemed to be interested in Zeshald's lecture, said that the lecture was interesting and that he will eventually write a thesis about it before leaving.

"Pheeew, that was close. We should head back towards our wagon as well"

"Thank you, but boy you sure are something"

Yuusuke commented on Zeshald's quick wits with both respect and sarcasm, to which Zeshald answered with a laugh.

***

After returning to the cart the two made a bed in the back of the wagon and started to sort aside wares to be sold at the stall tomorrow. At the same time the two were eating rara fruits and dried meat. During the preparation Yuusuke and Zeshald discussed about the incidental meeting with the princess, who was the instigator of the earlier uproar, and about the relationship between Zeshald and the king.

"I used to travel together with Esvobus. Don't you think the taste would be better with a little bit more salt?"

"Hoooo, so you used to be close with the king"

While customizing Zeshald's dried meat Yuusuke was listening to the old man's tale. The tale was from more than 20 years ago when Esvobus has not yet been crowned.

Esvobus, who was to become the ruler of the nation, made his country flourish in all

aspects but military prowess (military invasion). He used to travel around the world to deepen his knowledge in order to be able to become a respectable king.

“Being a good ruler aside, what this man lacked was ambition”

Being at the top of the fire arts users, renowned for their military prowess, he preferred a peaceful resolution of all things. As he was a good ruler, the masses also supported him. Thus he had a good reputation but was criticized for the military skirmishes by the armed forces and political pressure from the other countries.

“Harassment from the neighboring countries suddenly peaked during the recent years”

“Harassment?”

A mountain range of over kilometer high divides the land into three parts, two of which belong to the neighboring country of Blue Garden. Blue Garden’s social system is based on the principle that divine arts of the Four do not grant superiority. It is an emerging nation that opposes the social norms of the world.

A fortress city Paula, built at the foot of the mountain range, was the second largest city to the capital. It was constructed to watch over the border with Fonkrank. Incidentally, Paula was closer to Sanc Adiet than the Rufk village.

“Fonkrank is often marauded by what is believed to be civilian militants from the Blue Garden”

“Hey, isn’t that dangerous?”

“Well, usually that would spark a war”

While king Esvobus ordered to strengthen the border security and sent out a messenger with an official protest, Blue Garden side ignored it completely, demanding abolition of the caste system.

Not only that, a lot of spies from Blue Garden started appearing in Sanc Adiet. Some people, related to the palace, were also confirmed to have defected to the Blue Garden. As the information about strengthening the border security was also leaked out, this measure also does not seem likely to produce any result in solving this matter.

“This sounds exhausting…”

“Well, no matter how pacifistic the other side is, judging from the tactics it is going to take a while until the decisive strike“

“Will this country be alright?”

To Yuusuke’s question Zeshald answered: “For now” with a grim perspective.

“After discussing it with Esvobus, I plan to get inside Blue Garden”

“What does that mean… ?”

“I will be a spy. I also got invited by another defector of Blue Garden”

That was the reason of his “worsening” relationship with the king.

“W-wait! Isn’t this some highly classified information?”

“Yeah, it is most highly classified information”

“!! Is it okay for me to hear about this?”

Yuusuke, nervous from the light tone, that Zeshald told him this information in, asked him that question. Zeshald’s face got serious as he gave his answer:

“I am worried about what will become of you after being called into this world as a god of calamity”

Amongst the many opinions of what the god of calamity will truly bring about, different interpretations on what is being considered a calamity in the stories and texts, what will the calamity be? Will it be a calamity for those, ruling the world, or a calamity for the common people? In what way could the calamity be averted?

Finally, “Who will experience the calamity?”

“Perhaps I have stepped on the road of destruction, still…”

Unable to comprehend the intentions of the existence, who gave Yuusuke this power and called him to this world, knowing only that in the legends of the ancient times arrival of the evil god was known as a turning point in the history of Kaltcio, Zeshald has decided Yuusuke to be a transcendent existence that will judge this world.

He believed that Yuusuke would surely base his decision on the information he has obtained.

“I want you to know about many things about this world”

Chapter 6: Beginning of the new days

“This is made from the mooph (モーフ) material?”

“That’s right”

“How much?”

Even if the fabric was made from the fur of the animals, grown in Rufk village, after this customer they had completely sold out the clothes, tailored with Yuusuke’s customization power.

In the morning they lined good quality clothes and shoes at a bargain price at the stall, which they reserved. The goods were of good quality thus they literally flew off the shelves. Yuusuke, who was being the sales boy as Zeshald was showing him the ropes, completed the deal in a breath.

“We sold a lot. Now we should search for the daily necessities and prepare for the trip back”

“Right”

Yuusuke thought about the important secret, he was told last night, while he was packing the unsold accessories. Because of the recent provocations Zeshald was planning to infiltrate the neighboring country of Blue Garden as a spy.

It is not like he planned to take on this duty from the beginning. While palace officials were busy with their everyday duties, a direct military provocation was happening at the border with the Blue Garden. Meanwhile other provocateurs had their hands full with setting up the blockades on the main roads to further obstruct the flow of goods and people.

Loyal people, informed about the potential betrayers, considered shipping things through these roads to be too dangerous, which profited the betrayers even more so.

Despite that there still were people who held real power and achievements. Zeshald, still famous and popular within the palace, was one of them. Thinking shallowly, having retired from official duties as well as separated for the palace, Zeshald, having a lot of free time and talent, was indeed a suitable man for this task.

Yesterday’s commotion has shown the spies of Blue Garden “the antagonism between the former royal head divine arts instructor, Zeshald, and the king of Fonkrank, Esvobus” might indeed have turned out to be useful the propaganda that Zeshald said it to be.

“Do you understand? Even if the thing you want to buy looks cheap, do not immediately buy it – check around the market twice to evaluate the price”

“After all overcharging also exists here”

After his departure Zeshald wanted to entrust the matters of Rufk village to Yuusuke. There was also Sun. For Yuusuke to understand this world as soon as possible she could pass on her own knowledge and wisdom regarding the everyday life.

"It will be lunch soon"

"Want to grab a bite?"

After getting nearly all of the necessary commodities, the two entered a nearby restaurant. Even thou there were many stalls lined up along the street where one could grab a light meal, Zeshald chose an ordinary restaurant as to teach Yuusuke various new things.

The difference between the restaurant of the lower class district and those of the upper districts was huge. Generally a cheap restaurant also functioned as a bar during the night.

"These places never change, do they?"

"Well, the civilization is the same everywhere. Despite it being a different world you are still able to find a lot of similarities"

Zeshald's teaching method, based on moving around the city and showing the rules, allowed Yuusuke to slowly familiarize himself with the general knowledge of this world. As it was dinnertime the inside of the restaurant was packed. In the midst of the lively clatter of the guests, a pair, resembling a teacher and a student, was an interesting sight for other visitors.

***

—Early afternoon—

After coming back to their wagon they loaded it with the purchased goods and started preparations for returning to the village. If they left early in the morning they would be able to arrive at the Rufk village in the evening. Yuusuke also bought some seeds as he wanted to cultivate a field at the corner of the village. He planned to start customizing the land as soon as he returned home.

"I am sorry, are you mister Zeshald?"

As they were tying their luggage with a rope, a green haired man greeted them with a light smile.

"Hmm? My name is indeed Zeshald"

"So you are the royal head divine arts instructor"

Zeshald looked at the man who spoke with a mysterious voice for a moment, meanwhile Yuusuke blankly stared at the two divine arts users. The young man seemed to know Zeshald but he clearly was not his friend.

Knowing about Zeshald's complex situation from their earlier discussion, Yuusuke assumed that this green haired young man was "a spy from Blue Garden". Zeshald called out to Yuusuke before Yuusuke has fully understood the situation.

"Sorry Yuusuke, but could you leave us alone for the moment?"

"Eh? Y-yes"

Leaving Yuusuke at the wagon, Zeshald invited the green haired divine arts user for a walk on a road, leading towards the city. Although Yuusuke did not realize it, the green haired wind arts user accepted the invitation. The conversation between two divine arts users was private as the guest was a wind arts user and he was manipulating the wind so only his partner would be able to hear him talk.

["Do you feel like leaving it, this country?"]

As Zeshald predicted, it seems that yesterday's commotion was the deciding factor to initiate the plan to win the Zeshald over to the Blue Garden side.

After some time Zeshald returned alone and started to make his bed in the wagon.

Yuusuke was unable to find a topic to talk about since the old man returned. Zeshald was talking most of the time while Yuusuke wore a concerned expression. After finishing tomorrow's preparations they laid down to rest.

"It might be a bit too early to go to sleep"

"Yeah, the sun is still up"

If someone would have listened to Zeshald's quiet words and Yuusuke's wordless replies, he would never be able to understand the true meaning of this conversation.

***

The next morning Yuusuke and Zeshald left the city before sunrise. During the journey Zeshald was talking about Kaltcio.

Soldiers of the divine art city guard, tasked with maintaining order, had the area they had to patrol, extent of their authority, and actions, to be taken in case trouble occurred clearly defined to them to the extent where they had minute instructions what to do in case of public urination, what to teach about hygiene, and where to take the apprehended person.

"It is a good thing to visit adjacent villages to obtain new information as well as to learn horse-riding. When buying a new horse you should go to the city and…"

Zeshald was making Yuusuke cram a lot of new things at once as opposed the comfortable learning pace from before. Yuusuke, remembering the uncomfortable feeling, thinking he should also give his all right now, was also trying to remember as much as he could.

["It is related to the green haired fellow from yesterday after all"]

Going at the current pace, by the time they arrived to the village, Yuusuke thought he'd fall sick with the exam fever.

"Welcome home teacher. …Yuusuke, what happened?"

"Wa… My temples are twinkling"

"Umm, was it too sudden?"

As they arrived at the Rufk village the villagers gathered to help in unloading the Zeshald's wagon. Part of the sold goods were provisioned by the villagers and part of the daily necessities were also requested by them.

"Teacher! Did you buy a new hair razor?"

"Yes, take it from there"

"Perhaps you sold the shell earrings?"

"Regrettably I only sold a pair"

Villagers were bustling noisily around Zeshald for a while until the old man slowly changed the topic to tomorrow's weather.

"By the way, I have decided to go on a long trip again tomorrow so, everyone, please be careful and avoid getting injured or falling ill."

Suddenly all of the villager's emotions turned to surprise, but this was not the first time Zeshald went to far off lands or left the home for a long time due to his research, so villagers quickly regained their composure. They soon started jokingly talking about having to live more carefully for a while.

This time, instead of exchanging parting greetings with Zeshald, Sun turned towards the teacher with a confused expression, saying "I haven't heard of this". Having expected this Yuusuke calmly watched this chain of events unfold.

"Then will you return home?"

"Yes, I will, Sun"

"Okay…"

Hearing this, the villagers also returned to their homes. After placing the wagon behind the house and guiding the horse to the stable the three entered their house though the back entrance.

"What happened, teacher?"

As soon as they entered the house, Sun jumped closer to Zeshald. Teacher always told her about his trip prior to leaving the village for a long time or going on a long journey. This time everything happened too quickly for the girl.

"Sorry, the circumstances became a bit too complicated this time"

"…you cannot speak about it, can you?"

Sun cast her eyes down as Zeshald nodded in acknowledgement. Zeshald stroked Sun's white, well kempt hair and, having asked Yuusuke to join in, started to speak again.

"Yuusuke, you can live in this house even when I am gone. Sun, please look after him"

"eeeeh? ME?! Looking after YUUSUKE?

Zeshald implied the two of them living under one roof. Stealing a glance at Yuusuke she

saw him listening intently to Zeshald without noticing her watching him.

"I thought of leaving things concerning Sun and the village to you, Yuusuke, as you still have quite a long way to go in understanding the common things about this world"

"I understand…"

Yuusuke nodded, silently accepting Zeshald's instructions and thoughts. Zeshald also nodded, appreciating Yuusuke's thoughts.

Zeshald acted with sincere concern to educate Yuusuke about the world as much as possible and to push him in the correct direction knowing that, from hereon, Yuusuke will have to live without his support.

"Broaden your world, Yuusuke"

Zeshald also gave a key from the library, which was inside the house, to Yuusuke so the boy could learn to read and absorb the knowledge contained in the books.

That evening the three of them ate their supper, which was slightly better than usual, together. It was a party made with wishes to send Zeshald off on a safe journey.

—Next morning—

Zeshald left before sunrise when it was still dark. A little bit away from the village he waited for the envoys of the Blue Garden slightly off the main road. When they arrived, he boarded their carriage. Afterwards they took the shortest route to the national border between Fonkrank and Blue Garden.

It was a bold move, but after passing Sanc Adiet they took the main road, leading to the national border. Spies, accompanying Zeshald, were that convinced that Zeshald would not betray them to the road patrols.

According to the report of the several years long investigation, the discord between king Esvobus and Zeshald only deepened over time. Finally an order to lure him over to the Blue Garden side was issued four days ago.

Footpads were ordered to invite him if they saw a good opportunity to do so. Princess Violet's fondness of Zeshald was of some concern, but even she had no choice but to disregard personal feelings over governmental affairs thus Zeshald had no more support left in Fonkrank.

"We should be able to arrive at Paula in three more days after crossing the border"

"Doesn't matter, I am used to sleeping in the carriages. That aside could you have that dangerous group leave the village?"

["That village is my place of rest"] exclaimed Zeshald as he pointed out a presence, hiding in the shadows near the Rufk village.

"… … As expected of the former royal head divine arts instructor… to be able to sense the presence of the wind arts users group"

Sighing helplessly Zeshald returned a smile to his companions.

***

Waking in the morning Yuusuke found Zeshald had already left. From today onwards Yuusuke would have to think and make decisions for himself. Looking at the column of text in the customization window for the key for Zeshald's study, Yuusuke, having decided on the most urgent problem, greeted Sun.

"Morning, Sun"

"… Good morning"

She answered awkwardly from the other side of the table. Seeing her so nervous with anxiousness showing all over her face, Yuusuke thought to himself ["Nothing will change if I will not make the first move"] and changed the topic. After putting the key into his pocket he suddenly stood up, making Sun shiver her shoulders.

"Let's start making breakfast, alright?"

" Eh? Ah, okay… I am sorry!"

Sun frantically picked up a bucket and turned to go to the well outside. Yuusuke shrugged his shoulders while looking at her go and then walked towards the food shelves to pick up dried meat and rara fruits that were supposed to be their breakfast. Having picked up the fruits he called the customize screen and found the parameter for their sweetness.

"Oh, Sun. G'morning"

"Ah, good morning … aunt Bahana"

"You are preparing breakfast from now on? Wouldn't it be better to make him go for the water?"

Aunt Bahana spoke to Sun like that while shaking her head, urging her to pass on the manual labor. Unable to get any anxiety medication with Zeshald gone, exchanging morning greeting was difficult enough for the girl not to mention having any casual talk.

"You are having it tough, eh?"

"uuuugh"

While it was going to be tough, Bahama has decided to become the strength for the two youths in Zeshald's stead.

***

It was around the time morning mist cleared on the lower districts of Sanc Adiet. In the dining room of the Volace palace, towering above the highborn district, Violet, proceeding to cut and eat the best parts of honey soaked fruits, served as dessert, proceeded to complain to her aide.

"Zeshald will not come to the palace today either, I guess"

“Probably he has a lot of other matters to settle”

“It’s boring. How long is father planning to be angry with Zeshald? He should make up with him soon”

Despite thinking she would be able to hear those long missed tales of travel after an unexpected reunion at the lower city, Zeshald showed no signs of ever coming to visit her. Kreivol, her aide, was only scolding her noisily about not behaving like a princess so spending time with him was not the least bit interesting.

“That’s right, there was another interesting guy, called Yuusuke”

He was a rude man that seemed to be an acquaintance of Zeshald. He seems to have grown up in a far off land so it might be possible to hear strange stories from him.

“If I go to lower city incognito again, I might get some interesting information”

“Princess, the king has released an order forbidding traveling incognito for the time being”

“I don’t care, I DON’T CARE! I will just behave like a spoilt child asking him things like [Do you hate me, Father?]”

Chief attendant, crackling from princess’s bad manners, sighed from all his heart, saying “King also has his shares of hardships”.

***

Several days later, every nation received an official announcement from Blue Garden.

—Former royal head divine arts instructor of Fonkrank, Zeshald, is welcomed as an instructor of the elite divine arts users of our great country—

Chapter 7: Princess of the flames

"It's a lie! There's no way Zeshald could've betrayed us!"

"It's the truth. I understand your feelings but try to calm down"

In a room at the top of the Volace palace Violet's close aide, speaking with a steady voice, tried to calm the angry princess down. Violet, having no one else to vent her anger, anxiety, and uneasiness on, glared at her aide who was picking up a chair she had kicked down before.

"You are the ones that shunned Zeshald! Aren't you silently laughing at him?!"

"Not at all"

Although the angry princess kept herself from spontaneous bursts of divine arts, she scattered the fruit and flowers, served on the table, onto the floor. The curtains were already torn down and a part of the wall was stained with pieces of broken tableware and wine. The room was in a complete chaos.

"Damn it!… Why?!"

"Princess, please mind your language"

"Shut up! Get out of my face!"

Violet, with her back turned towards her aide, pointed towards the door. Kreivol bowed politely, as usual, and silently left the room. He fully understood Violet's outburst. He was also troubled, thinking that the event, which happened the other day, might have been a cause for this.

["Still, the disturbance is spreading in the palace… His defection to the opposing side might urge others to follow as well"]

["From now on even more attention will have to be focused on the actions of the palace staff"]

Kreivol thought as he wondered about means to tighten his grip of the fire god corps that he personally commanded.

Violet, having kicked the luxurious chair down again, was panting while gripping her shaking shoulders with both hands. Father Esvobus simply turned her away saying ["We will not talk about Zeshald"] without mentioning anything regarding the announcement from Blue Garden.

Their accidental meeting in the lower town the other day was not enough of a pretense for him to leave. The thoughts, that her actions could have triggered this, were tearing her aching heart apart with thorns of uneasiness and regret.

"Why……"

["Zeshald could not have betrayed them. There had to be some sort of explanation"] Violet thought while lowering her head to fight off the blurring vision in her eyes.

Suddenly an image of a black haired man appeared in her mind. ["That rude and ignorant man, called Yuusuke, what has become of him?"]

"Did he leave as well? Or could he …"

Princess raised her head up and looked outside the window. A small forest could be dimly seen before the endless plains, stretching into the horizon.

["Maybe I will be able to find some sort of clue if I visit the village of the powerless where Zeshald used to live"]

Violet's eyes beamed with the usual self-confidence as she decided on her next objective.

***

While palace officials were shocked by Zeshald's defection to Blue garden, common folk accepted it without much shock disregarding it to ["this is what palace got by alienating its officials"]. To people, better informed about the event inside the palace, it was a topic for discussions.

A man with a cheerful face walked through the back alley of the never changing main street of the never changing city.

"Hehehe…. With the rulers of the city shaken I can finally walk the streets"

He has spent last several years hiding himself in the Sanc Adiet slums. Although he has considered fleeing to Blue Garden, manual labor in a country where one's standing in society was decided by his skills would not allow him to live an easy life, he desired.

Compared to living in such a strict environment, living a free life of a social outcast here seemed more preferable to him.

Previously he always had to worry about encountering Zeshald while walking on the main street, but now that Zeshald has abandoned Fonkrank kingdom for the neighboring country of Blue Garden so there was no reason left for him to fear for.

"I feel like I can do anything! Hahah I feel that I could destroy a HUGE mountain in a single hit"

Feeling like that he approached the main plaza of the lower district. He could see a crowd around the gate to the middle district. Interested in what kind of spectacle has gathered people here he approached the crowd.

***

"EEEEK, LET GO OF ME KREIVOL!"

"I can't do that, Princess. Even if it is within the kingdom, going outside the city is just too dangerous"

Having heard about a village of the powerless where Zeshald lived, Violet attempted to go towards Rufk village. She managed to travel as far as the gate to the lower district before Kreivol caught up to her. Violet, intending to leave the city, continued to fight

with her aide who was determined to bring her back to the palace.

As Kreivol thought to avoid involving the palace guard, he mobilized every soldier of the god soldier corps and had them come down into the city under the pretense of patrol. Palace bureaucrats, knowing the whimsical nature of their princess, unanimously agreed with this.

"I am only going to that powerless village for a little check! How can that be dangerous?"

"If the king said so, then it is dangerous. Also, there is no reason for you to visit a village where he lived"

Although Kreivol attempted to subtly persuade the princess as not to let the masses hear about delicate subjects, princess Violet, in the midst of her tantrum, was completely ignorant about the prestige of the royal family as she talked about her objective.

"I might be able to find some clues as to what happened to Zeshald"

"… … this is not a good reason"

Kreivol, starting to feel a headache from all the worrying and fighting with the princess of the flames, urged Violet to behave more prudently. In the midst of this small racket one of the guards approached them and discretely called out to the commander.

"… Sir, there's a person, who says he has something to say about the village, the princess is speaking of…"

"Hmm?"

Kreivol turned his head towards the soldier and saw a shabby looking wind arts user waiting behind the guard while lowering his head. Noticing Kreivol's gaze, the wind user smiled a forced smile. Kreivol scowled, feeling that this man is dangerous.

"What is it? Speak up"

"H-hey, the thing is, there are villagers in that village that are in contact with Blue Garden"

Hearing this Kreivol and Violet instantly looked at each other.

***

Sun was watering a small field, which was a short distance away from Zeshald's house. In the meantime Yuusuke was fishing at a nearby river.

"Mh~ Mhhhhn~~~"

Humming a song, she was looking out for early sprouts while sprinkling water left and right with a convenient sprinkler that was produced by Yuusuke. Sun really liked this convenient tool that produced a small rain. In the morning she also chatted about Yuusuke with Bahana, who was cooking some sort of meal.

It was the 7th day since Yuusuke started living in Zeshald's house and Sun was starting to be able to act more naturally around him. Sun was optimistic with her progress, thinking that she might even be able to deal with her trauma as well.

After putting the water sprinkler to the tool shed, Sun was walking the village street to draw some water for dinner as she turned her head towards the road to Sanc Adiet, where a cloud of dust in the distance caught her attention. This cloud of dust was getting closer at a slow pace.

"?… … Who could it be…?"

***

Four carriages, full of city guards from Sanc Adiet, were rushing towards the village, surrounded by the cloud of dust.

"I can see it! That is Rufk, right?"

"Princess, please sit down. It is dangerous to move about in a running vehicle"

Soldiers in the carriages were well-trained individuals skilled in either attack, defense, healing, or communications. The carriages, supported by water and wind arts users, were going at a speed of a single person riding on a horseback.

Kreivol, warning Violet, who was hanging over the window at her seat, checked out the surroundings to confirm that there was no danger. There was no way he could bring princess Violet to the village, but he knew that if he took her back to the palace she would immediately sneak out and follow him.

He decided it would be easier to protect the princess if he could watch over her. Thus, usually stubborn Kreivol permitted Violet to join the trip this time. Instead, the trip made the common guards really nervous.

"Are we clear, princess? No matter what happens you must not get separated from me"

"Got it, got it. You are such a worrywart"

Violet was cheerful. Since the guards were going along with her, she believed there would be no trouble even if there were spies in the Rufk village. However she did feel some regret over the circumstances that brought her here – the complaint of the man that approached Kreivol some time ago.

—There was a spy collaborator of Blue Garden in the Rufk village—

He has seen a place where powerless were working with a spy from Blue Garden when he had visited the woods, surrounding the village, few years ago along with a superior earth arts user.

They were attacked by the spy in an attempt to silence them. Earth arts user was killed while the witness somehow managed to escape alive. He knew that the royal head divine arts instructor Zeshald was the main person, supporting the spy, but, thinking it was some sort of mistake, he stayed silent until now.

["There's no doubt that the period of time matches…. But that man has something

abnormal in his eyes”]

There was nothing strange in having a strange atmosphere around oneself after spending a long period of time alone and worrying about something. Even thou Kreivol understood that, he already had a bad prejudice about the man that approached him.

While having such thoughts the party in the carriage was approaching Rufk village.

***

Yuusuke was fishing in a small river that ran through the nearby forest. He was using a fishing pole, some fishing line, and fur bait, which he obtained through customization. A bigger river with big fish was farther away from the village and took a day just to walk back and forth, thus Yuusuke was aiming for small fish, living in the smaller river.

This was a suggestion from Bahana as it would allow Yuusuke to gain some stamina as, coming from a modern world, he was pretty weak for a man in this world.

“If I had to say… it became that much easier just by modifying it this little”

Yuusuke thought he would be easily able to catch the game in the forest by tweaking the traps a little bit. He was satisfied by a full fishing basket, which he managed to fill just by using a strong and transparent fishing line and highly customized fur bait.

“This should be enough”

Having caught ten fish, Yuusuke was packing his tools and preparing to leave the fishing spot as he suddenly felt human presence and turned his head towards the newcomer.

“Hmm, you really look like a novice”

“Ah, IT’S YOU!!”

Before he could notice, a green haired man stood behind him. It was the same man that called out to Zeshald a few days ago. He called himself Reifold and was probably a spy from the Blue Garden. He suggested Yuusuke to quickly return back to the village.

“It looks like something terrible is about to happen”

“What is it? What did YOU do?”

“Me? Oh I didn’t do anything?”

Reifold spread his arms while making a faint smile in response to Yuusuke’s allegations.

He couldn’t exactly put it into words, but this man carried a different kind of atmosphere than Zeshald. Even thou he felt that the man could not be trusted, warned about a terrible event, about to happen at the village, Yuusuke became worried and hurried to return to the village.

“Hey, you … are not here anymore!”

By the time he finished packing the fishing tools and the catch, Reifold’s figure was nowhere to be seen.

***

It was early afternoon. Having left half of the city guard at the village, a carriage was rushing back towards Sanc Adiet. Violet and Kreivol were sitting against each other. A suspect for treason – young powerless girl – was with them, her hands restricted with shackles. As expected, she was shaking while cowering her body.

"You've been shaking the whole time. Are ability users that scary?"

As they arrested this girl for being a long time servant in Zeshald's house, a young woman from the village tried her best to resist them and get them to stop treating this girl with violence. She reasoned that this girl was almost killed by the young ability users some time ago and was terrified of anyone, wielding divine arts, since then.

Divine soldier corps guards paid no heed to these protests and stopped their violent use of divine arts only by Violet's orders. She had been listening to Zeshald's stories about the lives of the powerless people so she felt sick watching that. (NOTE: 衛士隊 is used 2 paragraphs earlier while神民衛士 is used here. From what I understand, Kreivol took a detachment of city guard as the main force as well as several god corps soldiers as princess' personal guard)

After all Violet's original goal was to visit this village to learn about Zeshald's life and needlessly injuring the villagers would not help her cause.

Violet also could not ignore the fact that, as the resisting villager said, the girl was so terrified that she could not even walk or enter the carriage by herself. Also, wanting to learn more about Zeshald, she suggested to escort the girl to the capital herself. Of course Kreivol opposed that saying —

["A member of royalty riding in the same carriage as powerless… and one suspected of treason at that!"]

["You are coming with me so it's all right"]

Kreivol could only hopelessly surrender to Violets carefree, confident smile. Having sworn allegiance to king Esvobus and having had the princess put under his care, this was his usual reaction to the cold treatment he had received from the princess.

"You have lived together with Zeshald, right? Have you seen any suspicious people around him?"

"… … Do you … know teacher? … …"

"Zeshald has often played with me in the palace when I was a child"

Violet looked at Sun, who raised her head with ["Eh?"] expression showing on her face, with her red eyes beaming with confidence and determination.

"Please tell me everything you know about Zeshald"

Chapter 8: Yuusuke's decision

Having hurriedly returned to the village, Yuusuke called out to Bahana, who he found loitering near the village gate.

"Miss Bahana!"

"Ah, YUSUKE! It's Terrible! Sun, she …"

Bahana rushed over to Yuusuke and clung to him saying, "Sun was taken by a group of guards".

Guards, surrounding a guard carriage that was still in the village, started shouting after spotting Yuusuke. Yuusuke handed over his fishing tools and the fish to aunt Bahana and started walking towards the carriage.

"STOP RIGHT THERE!"

"You, with the black hair, your name is Yuusuke, right?"

"It's as you see."

Still nervous from having weapons pointed at him, Yuusuke feigned calmness as he faced the guards. After exchanging a few words with the other soldiers, one of the guards approached Yuusuke, informing him that he is being apprehended as a suspect for spying.

They acted completely different around him as he was a divine arts user, not to mention one whose skills were not known. Instead of using force like they did with Sun before, they exerted caution when dealing with Yuusuke.

"I want to know where you took Sun, so could you take me to the city as soon as possible?"

Yuusuke urged the guard towards the highway while slowly approaching him. Yuusuke, still being feared by the guards even after having clad his hands in shackles, spotted aunt Bahana with the group of worried villagers. After telling her, "I'm off to see Sun," the youth entered the guard carriage.

***

"Hmm, so Zeshald was reading records and research related to the Evil God the entire time."

"Yes… At least suspicious people … unknown people … or anyone like them … have not visited him."

"And Yuusuke?"

"Eh? About Mr. Yuusuke… I am not sure about him myself…"

Sun lied, as the person that Zeshald has recently brought with him into the village was yet not that well known to her. Still, she was ordered by Zeshald to keep the fact that

Yuusuke appeared from the small shrine a secret.

Sun averted her eyes from shame after telling a lie, but it was not noticed since she has been terrified the entire time.

"Excuse me. We have received a report from the guards stationed in the village. They have captured the black haired man."

"Oh, is that so."

A communication officer, that was a wind arts user has informed Violet's group. Sun's face has become even darker after hearing the report about Yuusuke, to which Violet showed a worried smile.

"As with you, I just want to have a little talk with him. After all he might be a spy as well."

Contrary to Violet, who was happy hearing about Zeshald, Kreivol was carefully observing Sun.

The girl held her hands in front of her. They were clad in wooden shackles, made to be used for the powerless. Her being frightened the entire time also did not seem to be an act. Still, he had to consider the possibility that it was an act.

["By speaking this way, princess is trying to avoid tormenting the girl."]

After the announcement by Blue Garden, the atmosphere in the palace right now was volatile, thus suspicions of betrayal would be met with severe consequences.

For the time being, Violet was satisfied with having a conversation partner. As Kreivol was thinking about the interrogation of the black haired man he met a short while ago, the guard carriage arrived at Sanc Adiet.

"Whaaa~~…, what a huge city!"

"What!? Is this your first time in the city?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact……"

Sun, feeling dread from all divine arts users except Zeshald, has not been to Sanc Adiet once.

The girl slowly got out of the carriage after Violet, who jumped out ahead of her. Still unsteady on her feet, Sun felt affinity towards Violet, with whom she shared a mutual feeling for Zeshald. As her partner was a younger girl, despite being an ability user, Sun did not feel that much fear towards the princess.

After getting out of the carriage, Sun looked towards the highway, and after seeing another cloud of dust, confirmed the approach of another carriage. Believing that Yuusuke was riding on it, she felt a little bit relieved.

***

Yuusuke, having his hands shackled behind him, admired the soldier carriage that was

not shaking at all despite going twice as fast as the wagon that he rode on when going to the city with Zeshald. At the same time, he was reading the customization menu for his shackles.

He noticed that if he concentrated enough, he could manipulate the parameters as well as activate the customization/creation without using his hands.

["It looks like I will be able to do this intuitively once I get used to it"]

Despite not able to stop the divine arts user from using his skills, the shackles were made by earth and fire arts users, and the quality of craftsmanship was very high, so they would not break easily. But, if they became ordinary…

["Parameters are quite similar to those of shouka… If I exert all my strength when I need to take them off it should be ok"]

Yuusuke was practicing manipulating parameters, while concentrating his mind and also being careful not to press the execution button.

Although he was sitting obediently, Yuusuke's gaze was defocused as he looked absentminded, despite being clearly focused on something. Such atmosphere, coupled with the color of his hair, brought even more uneasiness to the guards that were riding in the carriage together with him.

***

"Princess, let us return to the palace."

"Hm? Are we not waiting for Yuusuke?"

Kreivol, who was scolding Violet that ["Jumping from the carriage is a sign of bad manners,"] was mindful about the curious residents of the city that have started to gather around them. A spy of Blue Garden could have been mixed up in the crowd.

Since the approaching carriage was still some distance away, Kreivol judged it would be better for them to return to the palace instead of standing here. Since that meant the end of the scolding, Violet happily accepted Kreivol's proposal.

"Aaaah, your highness! I am glad to see you back safely."

A green haired man with a suspicious look in his eyes, who was surrounded by the city guards, turned towards them as they were nearing the gate, separating middle class and lower class districts. He was rubbing his hand with a flattering smile floating on his face.

"That's right, we had this guy wait here." – remembered Violet.

The man has been standing there as if waiting for merits. While he was flattering Violet, he shoved extremely rude attitude towards the guards.

Sun froze after seeing the sunburnt face of that man.

— ["Woohoo, we hit a jackpot! Ahahahahaha!! – "]—

— [“Heheh, hold his bitch down like this.“]—

— [“Aw, the hell. I was aiming for the neck.”] —

Fleeting nightmare of her past suddenly rose up from her memories.

“N… No.. Nooooo……!!!”

“Hm? Hey?! What’s happened to you?!!!”

***

The man looked at the girl while talking with the princess. [“It can’t be!”], he thought as he was overcome by anxiety. After successfully escaping from that terrifying water arts user, named Zeshald, he was hiding in the city slums for nearly ten years. Until recently, he was fearing apprehension his every waking minute.

This time, regaining his freedom after Zeshald’s exile, he got a chance to get on the good side of palace officials. He devised a plan to provide them with information concerning a Blue Garden spy. After all, there was nothing in that [powerless] village.

Compared to Foncrank, treatment of [powerless] in the Blue Garden differed like heaven and earth. Contrary to the Blue Garden, in addition to being treated like cattle, [powerless] could not expect to obtain support from the country officials in Fonkrank. (NOTE: this sentence can be completely off the mark)

Even if the incident from nearly ten years ago, concerning [powerless] treasured by Zeshald, came to light and truth about the deaths of two [powerless] and one earth arts user would surface, Zeshald, who killed the earth arts user, was now in the enemy nation of Blue Garden.

He expected that this would increase the credibility of his story and admonish any lingering doubts. Still —

[“Unbelievable… the brat from back then…? Her wound was supposed to be fatal… !!”]

Having thought this far, he suddenly realized that Zeshald was a healing type divine water arts user. If he could wield his arts to the extent of being able to kill a person by momentarily stopping his blood flow, he might have been able to save the girl despite her fatal condition.

[“Bad! This is bad! She remembers about me… …! Wa-wait it’s still okay, the result will be the same.”]

[“She was a still a brat then. She should not be able to remember what happened back then too well. If the man that seemed to be her father, who died back then, were to become a Blue Garden spy collaborator, then my problems would simply disappear.”]

While the wind user was persuading himself, his body breaking in cold sweat, the guard carriage that Yuusuke was riding in had arrived at the city entrance.

***

Yuusuke was brought up to the district gate. Upon arriving, he saw fire god corps, clad

in brightly colored clothes, gathered along with the city guards at a location not far from the district gate.

Looking for the bright red twintails, thinking, [“has that Violet come down to the city again?”] he spotted the familiar white hair.

“Sun!”

The guards surrounding Yuusuke instantly heightened their guard, since Yuusuke suddenly started running towards the other group of guards gathered around the gate guardhouse. They started chasing him while keeping a small distance.

If not for princess Violet, who jumped at her asking what happened, Sun, whose legs gave up their strength, would have been dragged off by the guards, who thought it to be normal to drag a resisting person away.

Instead, the guards were halfheartedly scattering the curious spectators while they waited for their princess’s mood to change. Suddenly, a black haired man, clad in shackles, jumped into the scene followed by a group of city guards, increasing the tension tenfold.

“Oh! Yuusuke! You came!”

“Sun!”

Without even caring to reply to Violet’s call, Yuusuke attended to Sun, who was shaking on the ground. Despite that, since Sun’s sudden collapse also weighed down on her mind, the princess restrained herself from dishing out fiery punishment on Yuusuke.

“Sun… is everything alright?”

“no…… n-no…….ah……”

Sun was muttering something, lying face down, covering her face with the shackled hands. She was trembling after curling up into a ball as if to hide from something. Yuusuke understood that his words were not reaching the girl. Thus, not knowing how to deal with Sun when she was in such a state, he redirected his attention towards the princess.

“Hey You, what have you done to Sun?!”

“ I.. I haven’t done anything!”

Violet, not used to being spoken to so frankly, froze momentarily, having had her self-confidence shattered by Yuusuke’s angry question that he asked disregarding every social norm.

“I was only simply talking to her!”

“Is this what you call [simply talking to her!?!?!?”

Shouting abruptly, Yuusuke inclined his body forward. After taking a hit on his back, as if losing strength in his entire body, he fell on his knees. Because his hands were tied behind his back, Yuusuke could not support his body and he fell down.

[“What is this? … The back of my nose feels heavy…?”]

Compared to the hazy consciousness and swaying vision he had at the time he appeared in this world, what he felt now was quite different. He heard a conversation from somewhere above him as he felt dull pain in his head as if it was being pierced by iron needles.

“Hey, stop using violence!”

“Eh? Y-Yes…. I am sorry mam.”

Yuusuke understood that he fell after being hit by a city guard. He was hit at the back of his head, and, when he fell on his knees, the soldier has probably also kicked him.

[“Damn…..!”]

From being hit into the back of his neck, he felt no strength from the waist down. While Yuusuke was mustering his strength in his current state, he managed to raise his face to get a glimpse of Sun. The girl had raised her face a little bit, noticed Yuusuke lying down on the ground, and covered again with her body continuing to tremble.

[“Shit, I’ll only needlessly frighten her even more like this.”]

Yuusuke, being angry at himself for his own helplessness, was thinking about how good it would be if he could customize his own body, and complained to whomever gave him this power for not giving his body any fighting abilities.

Even if he created a powerful suit of armor with his ability, its ability to help the wearer through the tough situation would still depend on that wearer’s physical abilities. Being a game otaku, Yuusuke had little experience in fighting, not to mention any training in martial arts.

“Damnit Yuusuke, don’t you keep crawling on the ground like this!”

“Oh~! It’s this girl! She is the child from back then!”

Violet, who has called a soldier that was a water arts user and was currently instructing him, only now remembered the green haired man that has given her the information. This man was saying those words as he was pointing towards the girl lying on the ground. He decided to gamble now and continued his fake story.

If only he could somehow connect the story to the fact that the girl became terrified after seeing him. She has succumbed to fear because she remembered the tragedy from her childhood. Even though he was not sure if she remembered all the details from that day, it would still be convenient for him to silence her by using this opportunity.

A powerless man, accused of dealing with a Blue Garden spy has brought a young child with him. It was surely to fool the eyes of any potential witnesses. He saw this child getting hit by a stray divine art during the battle. It was a serious would so he thought the girl to be beyond saving.

Having thought of a “It happened back then” story, he approached the princess and, faking politeness, told it to her. Violet, fond of listening about adventures and other

people stories, listened attentively to this man.

"uuuuuhm…."

However, for Violet, who knew "old geezer Zeshald" since infancy, the "Zeshald" in this story seemed like a different person. Based on what she heard about "teacher Zeshald" on her way to the city, Sun and Zeshald – she could not feel any signs of either of them being spies.

["Th.. That reaction does not seem favorable… Was it too soon after all?…… Th-That's right – the evidence! It will go my way once I show her the evidence!"]

Passing Violet's reaction as ["Was Sun really there during that incident"], he decided to prove girl's presence during the incident by showing the scar that the divine art must have left on her body. Man was staring at Suns dumbfounded face as he was telling about his bravery during the fight with the spy

Humans are strange creatures. When something outside their range of comprehension happens, they easily fall into a state where their mind stops functioning . When confronted with anger or malice, rather than getting angry, rather than getting sad, they are overwhelmed by surprise. Sun was surprised.

She, who has never traveled farther than the village outskirts, who was ignorant of the ways of the world, was surprised that such kind of humans existed.

["Enough with your nonsense."]

Hearing the man's story, Yuusuke, who was still lying next to Sun, understood that this wind arts user was one of the two that attacked Sun and her father. His body was shaking from resentment of being unable to do anything. Gathering his hazy consciousness by utilizing his anger like it was some game resource, he opened the customization menu.

"There is no mistake! Here, she should have a scar around this area from that encounter!"

"!!!….."

"H-Hey!!"

Frustrated by the man, Violet groaned while holding her chin. Meanwhile the green haired man walked towards Sun, who was still in shock, and forcibly made her stand by pulling her on the shackles.

Sun, finally regaining her senses, started struggling to get away from this man. Before Violet, who was already wary of how freely this person acted in front of her, could even comprehend his actions, the wind user has torn the powerless girl's clothes to pieces with a wind blade divine art.

"Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!"

"Look, it's there after all! It's here, HERE, it's this scar!"

Holding the desperately resisting girl by the manacles that tied her hands, the man was

pointing towards the scar that ran diagonally through Sun's abdomen.

Rather than questioning the scar, that was the reminder of a wound so deep that it even held different color that girl's skin, Violet was alerted of the true nature of the man that he has just revealed.

["This man…?"]

"This scar might be the result of Zeshald's healing arts. That's right! It might be that my escape was successful because that traitor was forced to heal this wound"

"ENOUGH WITH YOUR CRAP!"

Yuusuke punched the man's face with the shackles (SHACKLE PUNCH) as the wind user was drunk on his glory. After standing up, Yuusuke hit him with all his might again with the Kaizer Knuckles (from what I found in google this is probably a reference to knuckle dusters in some games, namely FF, Ragnarok Online, castlevania), he made from the shackles that were meant to be used for power users, and thus were made from a very hard material to begin with.

Man was facing sideward, pressing both hands to his face. City guards could not understand how Yuusuke got out of his shackles. After all it was an item that even a skilled earth arts user could not break easily.

"Y-You! How did you do it?!"

Soldiers prepared their spears … and their target disappeared.

"Wh-what is this?"

Princess stood dumbfounded, staring at the place that her soldiers were just standing at. A huge hole has opened there.

When customizing something as big as planets' surface, it was treated as a map and customization power only worked at a fixed distance from the place that Yuusuke has touched.

Customizing a house, its structure, doors, windows, and even roof were treated as separate items, but it was possible to customize them at the same time as an item group.

Incidentally customization on flowing water, such as rivers, had to be performed fast or it got canceled as the water, which was being customized, has flowed away. Cancellation could be avoided for a short while by moving along the flow.

The city of Sanc Adiet, despite being separated into districts, was treated as a huge pyramid shaped pile of stone. Yuusuke's customization power recognized this city as several different objects joined as a single item group.

As long as it was recognized as one item, there were no limitations on customization that could be performed. When used like this, customization power could be used as a weapon. Today was the first time that Yuusuke has decided to use his power in battle and, as his first battle maneuver, he created a pitfall.

"In the past, this man attacked an innocent powerless father and child. He's one of the murderers!"

Yuusuke pointed at the green haired man, who was still silently lying on the ground. As Yuusuke was explaining in detail of what he heard from Zeshald, the man's face became stiff. Suspicion also appeared in princess Violet's eyes as she started eyeing the wind user.

"Damn! Brat! You are also their comrade!"

"-!!"

Half-crazed, the man shouted, cast a wind blade and directed towards Yuusuke. Yuusuke raised his hand in a similar motion, and activated customization for the stone pavement he did a little while ago.

With a dull sound, a stone wall emerged in front of Yuusuke. Having had its divine arts resistance status buffed up, the wall stopped the wind blade, scattering it in all directions.

"Wha?!"

Divine art to freely manipulate earth and to join rock into a shape that resembled a golem, belonged to the earth manipulation type divine arts. But the divine art to instantly create holes, that can swallow people or to raise a stone wall in a blink of an eye was unheard of.

The soldiers of the fire god corps and the spectators who managed to avoid falling into the pitfalls, were also left speechless by the man that threw the wind blade.

"Haaa!!"

After a moment of silence, Yuusuke kicked the wall of stone he had created. He performed a simple customization on the walls base for it to fall forward.

Since the target the pitfalls were meant for did not stay in one place for a long time, and since the pitfalls had to be hidden (for them to be effective), Yuusuke has decided to attack with the walls themselves .

"Damn, using some strange divine arts!"

The wind user jumped backwards to avoid the falling wall and attempted to flee. Since Yuusuke had no other means to attack while the wall was falling, he restricted the fleeing man by erecting other walls in succession.

Yuusuke was coordinating his walls with the pitfalls, to restrict wind users movements and vision. At the same time, he was paying attention towards the spectators as to avoid hurting them in the process. Unfortunately for Yuusuke, who was a novice in fighting, such concern was equal to negligence.

Such method of fighting, while being aware of the surroundings, often increased the difficulty and carnage. Only those with confidence and experience could afford to resort to such way of fighting. Yuusuke, being brought up in calm and peaceful environment, was being naïve.

“Whoa!”

With a sound of a propeller, a wind blade flew close to Yuusuke’s head, damaging his face and shoulder. Since Yuusuke was the one erecting the walls, the wind user was attacking him with the wind blades before his path of retreat was completely closed off.

Since the trajectory of the blades was hard to see, reasonably powerful wind blades, fired in quick succession, was a threat.

Erecting walls around himself, Yuusuke took a defensive stance. Several of the wind blades were scattered by the walls, but Yuusuke left an amateurish blind spot.

Defensive walls could not protect from attacks coming from above. After hearing the sound of wind, Yuusuke dodged immediately, but, as the attack grazed his side, he lost balance and fell.

As Yuusuke tumbled outside of the protection range of the defensive wall, the wind user has raised his hand over his head, preparing to deal the finishing blow. The moment he raised his hands his body was covered in flames.

“You….”

“My name is Violet, not You. Also I am not stupid, no matter how I look at him, that guy is strange.”

As Yuusuke raised his eyes, Violet snapped her fingers again as she ordered to arrest the wind user.

Chapter 9: Commoner district gate plaza

"Sun, are you all right?"

"……Yes."

As wind users were ventilating the city, by making wind blow the foul stench of burnt human out, Yuusuke, worried about Sun, asked the girl about her condition while a city guard, skilled in healing type water arts, was healing him. As they wanted to quickly change out of their torn clothes, they needed a place where they could change.

According to the game that Yuusuke's power was based on, if you customized a piece of equipment, it was automatically unequipped.

Sun was currently wearing a mantle of the fire guard corps, which princess Violet had provided for her, over her torn clothes. ["That's unexpected"], thought Yuusuke, as he was looking at them.

"Ahahahahah—Krielov, why are you down there?~"

After ordering the city guards to heal Yuusuke and free Sun, Violet was rolling on the ground, laughing, as she was peering into a huge hole in the gate plaza. Krielov was the only member of the fire guard corps that was swallowed by the ground, as he was the first to respond, in an attempt to restrain Yuusuke, when he broke his shackles.

The hole was about 2 meters deep. It ran through the pavement of the lower district, down until the city foundation. Even if the hole was not deep, it was somewhat difficult for the armored soldiers to crawl out of it.

These walls were not [produced] or [materialized] by Yuusuke's power – he [created] them by customizing the stone pavement and the city foundation.

"It is not befitting of a princess to laugh with an open mouth", replied Krielov, staying true to his professional duties, as Violet, looking at him from above, was clearly enjoying herself. He was standing at the bottom of the hole, with his back at the wall, thinking about the divine art that could create such pitfall.

He did not fall into a pitfall. It was as if a wall suddenly appeared before him, when, in reality, he appeared at the bottom of the hole. For a moment, he saw beads of light dancing around him, but they vanished almost instantly. ["What in the world is this divine art"], he thought, as he could not comprehend the phenomenon. While he was in the hole, several more people fell into it by themselves.

["A combination of every kind of divine art, eh….?"]

Krielov, and everyone else who were in the hole with him, suddenly were made to leave it. After being surrounded by faint beads of light, they were suddenly standing outside of the hole. Moreover, it felt like they did not move a step, and the bottom of the pitfall itself moved, until it leveled up with surface of the gate plaza.

After clearing up the holes and the walls, and returning gate plaza to its previous state, Yuusuke, protecting Sun behind him, stood in front of Violet. He asked Violet about the circumstances of the current incident. Soldiers stirred, as Yuusuke breached the

etiquette again, asking member of the royalty directly when her aide was nearby. Yet, this time, Krielov overlooked Yuusuke's actions.

Soldiers of the fire god corps and the city guard, who had to prostrate themselves and lower their eyes when speaking with the royalty, were calmed down by a simple gesture by the princess, meaning:

["Everything is fine, ignore it"].

"You truly are a terribly rude man. You should show at least some respect to me, a royal princess."

"Respect is not something you can simply get from others."

Violet smiled, agreeing to the comment, and explained that this situation was caused by the complaint of the man, who was apprehended, after being cooked to medium rare (burnt) a little while ago.

Violet told Yuusuke, that her party came to Rufk village after a complaint that there was someone collaborating with a Blue Garden spy. As Yuusuke was listening to this, for a brief moment, he remembered Reifold. Yuusuke was suspicious of why Reifold showed himself in the forest back there, letting Yuusuke know about the events, that were happening in the village.

"Well, in the end, it turned out to be a fake complaint. He obviously did that with the intention of making up to me."

Hearing how Violet planned to visit the village incognito to look for information about Zeshald, but after receiving a complaint from that man, an official order was given to the city guards, and having been a participant in the later events, Yuusuke muttered in shock:

"So, after all, you are the main cause. Moreover, the false charges… This is no joke!"

"Hmph, I told you that I had no intentions of treating any of you roughly."

"I wonder about that… That aside, shouldn't you at least take us back to the village?"

Going with a simple wagon, Rufk village was half a day's distance away from Sanc Adiet. As Yuusuke looked at the setting sun, he decided, that it would be unlikely for them to return to the village like this today. Thus, he attempted to get Violet to make up for the troubles, she had caused earlier.

"That man's story was fake and the charges will be dropped. Still, Yuusuke, your violent actions have caused injuries to the city guard."

"Eeeeh?"

As he did not remember fighting anyone, but the wind user, Yuusuke let out an awkward sound. Violet, with a huge smile appearing on her face, then explained to him that several people fell into the traps he created during the fight.

People, standing where the pitfalls used to be, have also confirmed princess' words. Those that stood where the holes appeared, only reported "Suddenly seeing a stone

wall before them and receiving no harm", however, some of the remaining people, who were near the holes, have slipped and fell down, receiving various contusions.

"Eeeh, is that really my fault?"

"It's not that I don't understand your feelings, but did you really have to start fighting there?"

Placing all the blame on the apprehended man, and leaving him to the city guards, Yuusuke did not expect his actions would cause such an uproar .

It was the truth that in his anger, he did not consider the feelings of the guards, and, as he had no trust in Violet or the guards, he decided to fight alone.

"Although you should be punished for this, it would leave me with a heavy conscience… so, what should I do…?"

"…"

Violet glanced at Yuusuke from over her shoulder, waiting for his reaction. Sun, who was standing nearby, looked at Yuusuke with a worried face, and then shifted her eyes towards the princess. Not wanting to look threatening or childish, Violet issued a strange condition:

"Oh, that's right, I order you to have fun with me."(NOTE: might be 'entertain me', but Yuu's response fit 'have fun' better)

Because of her social position in the city, Violet had the authority to write such crimes off. According to Zeshald's theory, Yuusuke held the divine arts (or blessings) of all four great gods, so he had the qualifications to be together with someone of the fire god caste.

In the rare cases that someone had the ability to use two divine arts, they usually preferred the social status, the higher tier divine art entitled them to.

Violet was captivated by Yuusuke's divine arts, capable of creating holes in the pavement and erecting walls, and she had no intention of punishing the black haired youth in the first place. She was enjoying herself, thinking of how it would inconvenience everyone in the city if Yuusuke could create endless walls, turning Sanc Adiet into a maze.

"Eh, saying such things… I don't have such experience and… I think, it's not possible to do it with someone, you don't love."

For a moment, Violet was engrossed by Yuusuke, as he acted like a shy young girl (NOTE: nervously wriggled while appearing to shine … something like: goo.gl/vMjln6)… but after a moment, she realized the meaning of what she said a minute ago…

"Yo-you IDIOT! I did not mean it like that!"

"It was a joke anyways~"

Yuusuke casually replied Violet, whose face was red, as she was trying to object that, saying:

“I am not that kind of a loose woman”.

“Y-you! Are you asking to be burnt to cinders?”

Yuusuke surveyed the gate plaza behind Violet, as she was trembling, tightly clenching her fist. Since the apprehended man was already taken away, some of the soldiers appeared to be resuming their patrol. As the onlookers also started leaving the plaza, it became a spacious and quiet place.

“Can you get the soldiers and the bystanders to move a little bit, towards that side?”

“Hm? What are you thinking of doing?”

Violet was trembling from the excitement, thinking of what will Yuusuke do, as she sensed an activation of a divine art, when Yuusuke started moving his finger in the air. She ordered the divine fire corps to clear the requested space of city guards and spectators.

Krielov, silently watching the events unfold, could not believe the change princess has shown compared to the pathetic mood she was in since morning. Thankful for this, he allowed Yuusuke to do as he pleased, for now.

As he had various divine arts mixed within him, for the time being, treating him equally to a fire arts user seemed to be a good decision. Krielov decided to overlook as much as he could for “Princess Violet’s entertainment”. In a short while, he has come to regret not stopping Yuusuke, when he had the chance.

“Copy-paste, copy-paste… Stairs should also have a handrail… like this?”

As he was customizing it, the structure still had only a rough shape, and was in no way usable, as small details still needed precise adjustments. After thinking by himself, Yuusuke has come up with a customization that would provide the princess with the entertainment she sought.

“After I helped him to clear the plaza, what in the world is he doing over there?”

“I wonder … I don’t understand Yuusuke’s divine arts that well myself.”

Sun could only explain that Yuusuke was moving his finger like this every time, he seemed to use his divine arts. She stayed true to her promise and did not say anything about things, she saw Yuusuke do this before, like changing the flavor of the food, redesigning tables or chairs, or creating new clothes from worn out clothes, shoes, and fabric.

“Okay. Check… there seems to be no problems. With this be all right?”

After using preview function to check the customize data for errors, Yuusuke confirmed, that his creation will not fall down, collapse under its own weight, or, possibly, sink. He then started walking towards the center of the plaza and called the two girls.

“Sun, come here.”

“Okay.”

After being called with a gentle voice, [tap tap tap] Sun ran towards Yuusuke's side with light trot.

"You too, come over here for a bit."

"Hey! What's with the different treatment here?"

Being called out so rudely again, Violet shook her hands while perking up her shoulders, yet she still stood in front of Yuusuke with a slightly amused appearance. The three of them, standing leisurely in the middle of the gate plaza, were looked at by the city guards and remaining onlookers, who were expecting something to happen.

Yuusuke pushed the [execute] button while basking in the attention along with the two ladies.

"Execute!"

The scenery before their eyes changed abruptly. The middle class district, which was surrounded with a tall wall, followed by the noble's district, which was surrounded by the even taller wall. At the top of the city, a palace towered above the districts. In an instant, all of them disappeared, and all, that could be seen, was the empty sky and the Fonclank plains, stretching off into the horizon. Cold wind, peculiar to high places, was blowing through the three people.

"Whooooooa! Whaaaaaat happened!!!!"

"I tried to create a viewing tower."

The tower was around 80 meters high. "I was right, you actually enjoy high places", thought Yuusuke, looking at Violet, who gasped from admiration, overlooking the scenery from the edge of the tower that was towering above the palace.

The tower looked be made from stone, but the actual material was customized to be as durable as steel. The necessary material was taken from the stockpile of the nearby quarry that was used for city expansion.

Bystanders in the plaza froze for a while, mouths agape, everyone's eyes directed towards the tower that suddenly appeared in the gate plaza, which seemed to be piercing the heavens.

"Y-Your highness! Are you aaall riiight?!~~ Princeeess Viiioleeet?!"

Coming back to his senses, Krielov shouted towards the top of the tower, from where he heard his princess' voice. Violet responded by poking her head over the tower's railing and waving her hand. Krielov felt the chills, seeing Violet lean out so far from the tower of such height, that he could barely recognize the red haired girls figure.

"Heeyy! Kreeeiiilooov! Look at this, it is sooo taaaall!"

"Heeey beee caareefuuul! Don't leeaan oouut soo muuch!"

Finally seeing Violets face, Krielov was able to calm down. He started thinking about the problems that the building, which was higher than the palace itself, would cause after being built in the commoner district. Still, Yuusuke's divine art, capable of

erecting such a building in an instant, weighted on his mind above all the other problems.

["Why did Zeshald leave a man of such strength behind?"]

As the amount of spectators in the gate plaza increased, so did the depth of the wrinkles between Krielov's eyes, more and more of which appeared on his face every day.

***

"You're the best! Will this building continue to stand here forevermore?"

"Well, I created it to be durable, so there is no danger of it falling anytime soon."

"Right… I had a lot of fun. Your divine arts are really interesting."

"Thank you for the flattery."

Resting areas have been created at every fifth floor of the staircase, connecting the viewing platform and the tower base.

Violet was in a good mood, listening to Yuusuke, who was explaining in simple terms that these resting areas, along with the small windows, were necessary to provide the illumination, without which the staircase would be pitch black.

Before long, sun started to set, so Yuusuke and the girls began their long trip down the stairs.

"Ah, my legs are so stiff."

"I have to say that going down is pretty tiresome. Are you all right, Sun?"

"Yes, I am perfectly fine."

As Yuusuke and Violet were catching their breath, Sun did not seem tired at all. The [artless] girl blushed slightly at the two people, who were admiring her stamina that she gained from her life in the countryside. As it became completely dark, a carriage from the palace arrived to escort them.

"Stay at the palace for tonight. I will order the servants to prepare a room."

"That sounds too formal… It's all right, we will stay the night at some inn in the city."

"You can't do that!"

"Even if you say that …"

Despite not knowing the proper manners of the palace, the two were brought there by Violet for the night.

Chapter 10: The end of the “two days - one night” turmoil

Having decided that the tower will be open to everyone, a guard was stationed at the entrance to control the amount of visitors, as too many people entering the structure at once posed to be dangerous.

A lot of people, who wanted to try climbing the tower that suddenly appeared there, crowded the gate plaza that was usually empty at this time. Merchants have already started recruiting earth arts users, capable of creating small copies of the tower structure to be sold as souvenirs. Healing type water arts users also used this chance to sell their services, as they positioned themselves on the resting areas and sold the recovery services for the climbers.

Meanwhile Yuusuke and Sun, who were half-forcefully taken to the palace, were resting in a huge, luxurious room.

After eating dinner, which was served for them in their room, Yuusuke went to a different room to rest, trying to shake the heavy thoughts that were partly worry, and partly anxiety away. It was not that he could not trust the people living in the palace after the recent incidents, but he did not believe that every important individual in the palace would be as open hearted as Violet.

“They looked unique in some sort of way….. I mean they looked eccentric.”

“Did anyone tell you that?”

Yuusuke was startled by an unexpected voice as he was talking to himself while circling around the room.

As he turned towards the door, Violet was standing there with Sun, who had been taken along. Princess was wearing a red dress, but she had let the twin-tails down,leaving her figure framed by her long, red hair. Sun was wearing a long one-piece dress. Having gotten used to seeing the girl in the village clothes she was always wearing, seeing Sun in an open dress was certainly a refreshing sight for him. Noticing Yuusuke’s gaze, Sun, ashamed, attempted to cover her chest.

“Hmmmmmmm… Wheeeere do you think you are looking at, Yu-u-su-ke?”

Having let her beautiful, silky, red hair down, Violet looked like a graceful and refined princess of a kingdom, yet inside she was definitely the same old cheeky girl.

“Don’t even bother, Violet… By the way, what happened? Why are the two of you together?”

“I brought you some dessert. Oh, and I also wanted to talk with you for a little while more.”

As the two girls entered the room, they were followed by a maid, clad in full maid uniform, who, after saying, “Excuse me”, entered the room while pushing a trolley used for delivering food. She arranged the plates filled with juicy fruits, and then poured honey on top of the dishes. This was Violet’s favorite dessert.

“Wooow, this sure looks sweet!”

“Hey, mind your manners.”

Sun laughed at Yuusuke who waited patiently for the dessert to be served and was now grumpy, complaining to Violet:

“This princess really has no manners.”

As soon as the servant disappeared in the corridor, they three started enjoying the dessert.

“How is it? It’s tasty, right?”

“Mhhhm, how about it Sun, are you enjoying it?”

“Uhm… Don’t you think this honey is really sweet ?”

Violet did not usually eat a dessert as sweet as this – she ordered to make it sweeter as to impress them. Thus, she now tilted her head at their unexpected reactions. Yuusuke seemed to be slightly disappointed by the food, while Sun somehow seemed to talk only about the honey.

“What’s wrong, did your lips got stuck together with the honey? Or is it that you can’t appreciate the taste?”

“No, it’s… somehow the dessert seems to be lacking the harmony of taste. It feels like anmitsu (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anmitsu) that was made to be too sweet.“ (NOTE: in original it was called あん ま味. After discussing it with my teacher I decided to leave Anmitsu here)

“These fruits, they seem to taste a lot like the rara fruits. They look like freshly ripened fruits that just became edible, but I grew too accustomed to the ones, prepared by Yuusuke.”

Yuusuke has opened the customization menu and, while Sun tried to delicately phrase her thoughts, has changed the sweetness parameter of the fruits to his personal setting. Noticing light effects fluttering around the dessert, Violet turned towards Yuusuke with a blank expression.

“Here, try it.”

“Mhnm.”

Yuusuke took a bit of the customized dessert and pushed it into Violet’s mouth.

“What’s this superb taste? Isn’t this an entirely new dish? “ – Mumbled princess with a full mouth.

Violet could not believe the extent of Yuusuke’s divine arts that made him capable of even such feats. She knew of water arts that allowed to control the moisture of the food, but it was her first time seeing an art that affected food on such a grand scale.

“Can you do anything else? What other things can you do with your divine arts?”

“Hm? Mmmmmmm… If it is not much, I guess I can also modify the clothes.”

Yuusuke became worried that he might have revealed a bit too much about the truth of his real capabilities, as the princess came to him while leaning forward from the curiosity. As his power had a lot of peculiarities, he thought it would be better to spare her the details. Having decided on that, he changed the topic.

“It looks like someone has released an evil beast in the nearby fields. I guess the only ones to do something like that around here are those guys from the Blue Garden.”

There was also the matters related to Zeshald. Lowering her voice, Violet told them about the damages that Blue Garden harassment has brought upon them.

Blue Garden has blocked off nearly all of the main roads in the border regions, making peddlers from foreign countries take long detours. This resulted in stagnation of money circulation and instability of prices, and it seemed that this situation would not be resolved in the near future.

“Father seems hesitant to use force, bureaucrats are also useless, and now Zeshald has gone over to their side…”

Violet sighed, resting her chin on her hand. She seemed to have discouraged herself with those words.

Her unhappy expression, along with her well featured face and dignified look, gave off some sort of mysterious aura when viewed from the side. Her closed, red eyes that always radiated determination, and her hunched small form that still retained childish features, looked very frail for a moment, and made Yuusuke feel that he wanted to protect her.

Having thrown a piece of honey covered fruits into her mouth by a precise throw, she spoke with a full mouth:

“I will order a carriage to bring you back to your village tomorrow after breakfast. Rest well tonight.”

“We will accept your offer.”

After finishing the dessert, the two girls left Yuusuke’s room. As Sun’s room was next to the one they just left, Violet said her goodbyes and returned to her room in the upper floor.

“You also go and get some rest, Sun.”

“Okay… Uhm, Mr. Yuusuke.”

Sun hesitantly approached Yuusuke, gently held his hand for a moment, and then quickly drew it back. Last time Sun willingly touched Yuusuke was when she was washing his feet. The true meaning of this gesture was, [“I trust you”].

“Good night Mr. Yuusuke.”

“A… ah.. gnight.”

Trailing Sun with his eyes as she entered her room, Yuusuke also returned to his room, bewildered.

["What the heck was that?"]

***

The next morning, after finishing the breakfast that was served again in their rooms, Yuusuke and Sun went down to the first floor of the palace and climbed into a carriage that was waiting for them accompanied by a group of soldiers. Sun was wearing the city clothes that she got as a souvenir. Sadly, the clothes which were torn yesterday, seemed to have been disposed of.

"Heeeey~~! Wait a bit Yuusuke!"

"Your highness! Running like that is improper!"

Soldiers, who were slowly preparing the carriage for departure, saw Violet noisily running towards them, followed by Krielov who was scolding her, and became visibly tensed and quickly corrected their postures.

"Do the same thing that you showed me last night to these as well?"

"Heh~"

Sun could not hide her amusement seeing Violet holding a basket of high class rara fruits in her hands.

There were eight large rara fruits in the basket. Having customized seven of them to be sweet, Yuusuke changed the spiciness parameter of the last one, before returning it to the basket.

"It seems one of them was a failure."

"What? Which one?"

Seeing Yuusuke say that with a smirk on his face, Sun shoulders started to shake from the amusement as she has also eaten one of those once before. Sun could only manage to eat one third of that fruit. Violet, confused by their amusement, was looking forward to the desert, this time with slight anticipation.

"I was pleased with you two. Come to play with me again, Yuusuke."

"I might come again if I have business in the city."

Soldiers bustled, protesting against a flat out refusal to their princess' invitation. Krielov also formed a complicated expression. Even if this mysterious person did not think much of visiting the palace, he could have made his intentions clear in a more subtle way.

***

Having left the palace and riding through the city in the carriage, Yuusuke talked to Sun about what they will do after returning to the village.

“Miss Bahana is probably worried sick.”

“Uhm… She is giving her all when it comes to protecting me.”

They discussed about various things, such as going to aunt Bahana’s place as soon as they return to the village, watering their field, or what happened to the fish that was left behind. Unconsciously, the distance between them shrunk to an arm’s reach, a far cry from two days ago, when they could not even be near each other.

Finally, the city guard carriage, which seemed to fly on the highway, has brought them back to Rufk village before noon.

***

Unfortunately for the young man, princess Violet was also fond of spicy food, thus having tasted the fruit that he labeled as [“a failure”], she got hooked on the new flavor. Moreover, this taste could only be created through the usage of Yuusuke’s divine arts.

“I want to meet Yuusuke…”

Hearing Violet silently say things like this to herself only caused Krielov’s worries to pile up.

“Uuuugh… So did sir Zeshald intended this person to get close to the princess all along…? It’s impossible, but still…”

Various misunderstandings, that were caused by the black haired youth recently, made the close aide feel butterflies in his stomach.

Chapter 11: Pave the Way

A few days after the incident, the villagers warmly celebrated the safe return of the two youths. After this incident Sun has grown stronger (NOTE: [after the rain falls, the ground hardens] was the proverb used in the original sentence) and started being more open around Yuusuke. Reifold also has not appeared before him since that time at the riverside, so the young man was busy with his life in the peaceful village.

Having slept in late, Yuusuke entered the living room as soon as he washed his face in a water bowl, which was placed in his bedroom, to wake himself up.

"Why was it there?"

"Oh, you are finally awake. You are such a sleepyhead, Yuusuke."

"Ah, good morning Mr. Yuusuke. Shall I serve you breakfast?"

For some reason Violet was sitting at the breakfast table. Krielov's figure could also be seen near the front door.

"Still, this [fried] food is also very delicious. Did you create it as well, Yuusuke?"

"Since the ingredients were there… that's not the point!"

After tasting the palace food, Yuusuke had cooked this dish feeling nostalgic for something slightly more elaborate to eat. Thus, he managed to cook something from the fish that he has left with Bahana before he went to the capital. After adding in flour, eggs, and cooking oil, he customized the ingredients in turns, and created a dish with a splendid grill flavor.

Unlike the sweetness parameter of the rara fruits, aside from creating fine flour from wheat grains, the rest of the dish preparation could be performed without relying on customization. On that very same day the recipe has spread within the village, and now it has become a standard cuisine of every household, with each of them coming out with their own flavor.

"Weeeell, it's all right. Sit down for now, we will talk about the important stuff after the meal. Sun, bring Yuusuke something to drink."

"Why are you ordering around here?"

It seemed that the day would be difficult from the early morning. Yuusuke sat at the table with his head down dejectedly. For now he filled his stomach with deep fried potatoes, deep fried meat with vegetables, and squeezed rara juice. As a side fact, rara juice could be fermented into fruit wine.

The good quality, delicious product was conveniently called [Rara wine], and could be sold for quite a good price.

***

After a small break following breakfast, Violet began to talk:

“Then, about my reason for visiting you today.”

“It’s not about the sweet rara fruits, is it?”

“That was part of the reason,” replying to Yuusuke’s sudden interruption, Violet took out a letter sealed with the royal seal. By pulling up and down on the edges, she opened the letter and started reading it.

“In light of your recent achievements, you are provided with an opportunity to join public service in my name: Esvobus Volance the Eighteenth.”

“What is this?”

“Simply speaking, it is a letter of summoning.”

Even though the letter contained an invitation to serve in the palace, the message also implied that the recipient was being called to “serve the country.” Basically it was an order for Yuusuke. After drinking the squeezed rara juice in one gulp, Yuusuke scowled while sitting on the chair cross-armed.

“I want to say that I don’t care about it… but can you tell me about it in detail?”

“Uhm, since it’s you, I did not expect you to agree to this easily.”

Two days later, Yuusuke’s summoning became a hot topic amongst the bureaucrats. Of course, the watchtower, which became the highest building in Sanc Adiet, was not officially recognized by the palace. And yet, there were protests coming from the inhabitants of the middle class and noble’s districts who could not tolerate the existence of a taller building, calling it “outrageous”, thus posing a problem in the commoner district.

Their proposal to erect similar structures in their districts was denied with:

“A repeat of the outrage of the commoner district shall not be tolerated.”

As the tower was built for princess Violet, and with it becoming a popular tourist attraction that brought in profit, there were no calls to demolish the structure in the near future. However, if the inhabitants of the middle and nobles districts were allowed to have their way, it would set a bad example that could affect the caste system that the country was based on.

There was also the matter that the builder of the tower was related to Zeshald, who recently defected to the Blue Garden, which weighed down on the bureaucrat’s minds. They were afraid that the instigators, calling people to defect over to the Blue Garden side where caste system was abolished, would gladly put this new information to work for their propaganda, which they spread every day.

They thought that having the source of their worries, Yuusuke, serve the Fonclanc country as a palace guard, would allow them to keep their appearance. As king Esvobus decided to enlist Yuusuke in the public service during the Royal Council, Violet volunteered herself to carry out the duty of relaying the decision to the recipient.

“It matters little that you can tailor clothes and prepare food, the key ability that you have is the divine art that you used to build that tower.“

Currently, as a response to provocations, a plan to build a fortress on the border with Blue Garden is underway. It is expected that you would lend your skills in its construction. If you comply with the public service duties, Rufk village will be given a privilege of special treatment.

"Well? The proposal doesn't sound bad, right?"

As Yuusuke was lost in his thoughts, Violet stood up, walked behind him, and twined her arms around his neck.

It seemed she was trying to use her sex appeal as a young woman to bend Yuusuke's will, but a fourteen year old girl embracing a man in his twenties looked more like a brother that was pestered by his younger sister, who was hugging him. Smiling, Sun cast down her gaze.

"A guard, eh…?"

"As you will be serving in the palace, the pay will be good as well. You want to provide Sun with a comfortable life, don't you?"

"What do you mean, saying random things like that… It is not like I could commute from the village."

"As expected, there is quite a distance from here to the palace."

As Yuusuke asked for some time to think, Violet ordered him to come to the palace with his reply after three days.

"There is no way for me to ignore it, is there?" (NOTE: lit: I still have to go down this road, dont I?)

"As I told you before, this is a written letter of summoning. Disregarding it means ignoring the king's order."

Disregarding a king's order is equaled to military insubordination. As the definition is obscure, you are unlikely to be punished. Still it is not like the king's order can be ignored.

"In that case, a different type of service will be forced on you", added Violet.

"How troublesome…"

"He hee, well, have fun thinking about it. I will expect to hear a favorable reply from you."

After speaking these words, Violet left their house, tightly holding her sweet and spicy exquisite rara fruits.

***

"What should I do?"

Mumbled Yuusuke, sighing in a now quiet room, while asking for Sun's opinion. He was told that the village would also benefit from that, so it probably was not an awfully bad

decision when thinking about what was best for the village. However, Sun would be left living alone by herself, should Yuusuke accept the offered position.

"Amazing Mr. Yuusuke. This is a huge promotion!"

"Uuuungh, it turns out like that after all…"

"It seems that you will also be able to come home at times, I think it's a good offer."

Sun seemed to perceive the governmental position in a favorable way. As for Yuusuke, just when his life with Sun has finally gotten on the right track… just as he began to enjoy it… it was too good to be true… it happened all too fast… thus his feelings were complicated.

["Won't you feel lonely?"]

However, unable to ask this question,Yuusuke feet as a failure of a man.

["Yes or No, either answer would make me feel depressed"]

Thinking like that really appeared to be "fun". After drinking whatever was left of the squeezed rara juice, Yuusuke looked at the ceiling.

***

"Oh, Yusuke. Heading off to the forest?"

"Miss. Bahana."

The next day, Yuusuke met Bahana as he left the house while carrying the fishing tools. Yuusuke asked her if he should do his best and go to the city only because of a selfish wish to honor Sun's feelings. Bahana's answer to this question was:

"In case a fight broke out, you would be protected, right?"

"Probably… I was ordered to help in the construction of a fortress with my abilities. Afterwards my responsibility should be adjusting the taste of the food."

According to Violet, king Esvobus seemed to have no intentions of sending him off to war. Yuusuke thought that after the fortress was completed, it would also make trespassing into the foreign territory difficult for the Blue Garden side.

"Well, the decision is still up to you."

Bahana patted Yuusuke on the back, saying, "Well, think it thoroughly, before making your decision". Yuusuke cried out. The women of this village were really strong.

***

Yuusuke, who was lost in his thoughts, sat on a bench he made by customizing the earth at the bank of a streamlet running through the nearby forest, which became his standard fishing spot. Due to all the thoughts, he couldn't concentrate. Despite that, in about thirty minutes he already caught four fish in his basket.

"Wow, your fishing hook is really awesome, I want one of these for myself."

“Wah?! Don’t scare me like that!”

Reifold, who appeared at Yuusuke’s side without a sound, was examining the fur bait that Yuusuke had created. He seemed to be a spy for Blue Garden, who carried an otherworldly atmosphere around him, and had the ability to appear out of thin air.

“What hole did you crawl out of?”

“Fufuu, I belong to the forest tribe after all.”

Usually referred to as the [Wind artist], the wind arts user was also excessively elusive. He quickly changed the topic towards the invitation from the palace. Yuusuke instantly started questioning things like how much did he know. He wondered if the fact that he would become a palace official would trouble Blue Garden and force them to make a move.

“That’s right, you can instantly raise a giant fortress with your divine arts. That is why I must get rid of you…”

“?!”

Yuusuke immediately prepared for a fight. Opening a customization menu by concentrating, he called out [Customization status for the map item] that he practiced many times just in case he needed to fight. He instantly erected multiple defensive walls around himself, as well as trap zones similar to the pitfalls he has used before.

“What’s this, what’s this? The aura you have looks really dangerous. I specialize in relaying information. Unrefined jobs like assassination are outside my field of specialties.”

“Hey, listen to yourself…”

Reifold sat down on the bench, interested in the walls that Yuusuke had erected around him.

“Say, how effective are they?”

“Want to try them out yourself?”

Grinning, Reifold manipulated wind, creating a golem by collecting nearby leafs and fallen branches. Yuusuke watched him, thinking, “So it is possible to do things like that too.” Through the use of wind pressure, the golem was made to look humanoid. Just as it entered the trap zone it stepped on the thin cover of the pitfall and fell in.

Immediately after that, several protective walls slid down into the hole, falling onto the trapped golem. The bottom of the pitfall became a mix of shattered branches and pieces of earth.

“Whaa, that was pretty harsh. I didn’t notice the pitfall over there.”

Showing complete ignorance on the tragic fate of his golem, Reifold shook his shoulders. His attention focused to one of the walls, the wind user touched the cover of another pitfall with the tip of his boot. Again, trap activated and the wall fell down on the hole. This wall did not break and became a bridge over the trap.

"So, you are becoming a castle official?"

"It was too sudden. I am troubled over making the decision."

"Oh? Would it hurt to try working for the country?"

"Why?"

Since refusing the offer would be in favor of the Blue Garden, rather than receiving duties and responsibilities, it would be better to argue for a more profitable offer. Yuusuke's attempt to pry on how much this man knew was splendidly avoided by the self-called member of the forest tribe.

"Whichever road you choose, it would better come with rewards and favors."

"Hmmm."

Truly, Yuusuke wondered what did Reifold had to gain from talking to him like this.

"Say, why did you…. did he leave already?!"

Just like last time, Reifold disappeared as suddenly as he came. He also took one of Yuusuke's fur baits, as well as some information regarding his divine arts.

***

That night, enjoying an evening meal comprised of finely sliced chicken, a salad with some dressing of cube sliced rara fruits, and grilled small fish, Yuusuke talked to Sun about his plans to travel to Sanc Adiet the next day.

"Understood. In that case I should wake you early, right?"

"Ah, Thanks"

Yuusuke could hardly say that he was already used to handling a wagon. Still, he had no choice but to somehow manage to drive it alone. As he only had to head straight on the highway up until the city, the trip tomorrow did not worry him too much.

As they stopped talking, the sound of the tableware and the crunching sound, heard when eating fried food, were the only sounds present in the living room.

"Mr. Yuusuke?"

"Eh? Wh-What is it?"

Being talked to so suddenly, Yuusuke staggered for a moment. Sun was worried about Yuusuke from the depths of her heart as she said, while smiling awkwardly:

"I will be all right. Certainly it will be sad living alone, but such things also happened often when I was living with teacher."

Given that there were times when the house got empty due to Zeshald going on a long trip, Bahana often worried about her, and having gotten the chance to feel the same way, Sun wanted to give her all as she said those things to Yuusuke. Still… that was a somewhat embarrassing experience for her.

“Teacher has told you that with time, you will become a person that will move the world.”

“The world, eh…?”

“Because of that, you need to use every chance to learn more about the world.”

“……”

Remembering Zeshald’s words, Yuusuke was also reminded of his vague reason for appearing in this world.

After all, he was the [Evil God], an existence called here from another world. What is he supposed to accomplish? Why was HE called here? No matter how much he thought about it, he could not come up with the answers, so the only way left to find them was to continue living in this world and broadening his knowledge.

“You’re right…”

After finishing their meal, until the time they went to sleep they did not say a single word to each other.

***

The next day….

Before the morning mist lifted, Yuusuke, with a change of clothes in a small backpack, sat on the driver’s seat of the wagon. The only one to see him off was Sun, who had woken him up. If he became a palace guard, he would probably be unable to return to the village for a while.

Yuusuke, trying to think of an appropriate way to bid Sun goodbye, finally exchanged a simple greeting with Sun.

“I’m heading off, Sun.”

“Good luck, Yuusuke.”

Thus Yuusuke, riding Zeshald’s wagon, left Rufk village and disappeared into the morning fog, towards Sanc Adiet.

Chapter 12: Volance palace

Unlike Zeshald or the god corps, he did not possess the water arts necessary to restore the fatigue of the horses, thus, resulting in several breaks along the way. By the time he arrived to the city, it was already dusk.

"I didn't expect it to take so long when traveling normally....."(Yuusuke)

Yet again, Yuusuke began to feel the difference in power that comes with the absence of a particular divine arts. He headed towards the nearby lookout stable, ran by the [artless], to park his carriage, and walked towards the soldier's guardroom at the gate square where the observation tower stood. From there, it was possible to contact the people of the palace.

"Oh, it's you. I have heard about you from the higher ups."(Soldier)

The soldier at the guardroom transmitted the message to the palace about Yuusuke's visit, in the interim a welcoming carriage came over. The carriage that Yuusuke boarded drove past the middle districts and entered the noble district, where it headed towards one of the four main entrances to the palace, which is located at the lowest floor used mainly by the god corps.

Currently, three parts of the first floor of the inner palace is occupied by the kitchen, the servants' quarters is located in the basement, and the general guards' dormitory covers the rest of the first floor. The commanding officer and vice commanding officer of the guard corps uses the 2nd floor entrance, the living quarters for the officers is also located at the 2nd floor.

The 3rd floor entrance is being used by the bureaucrats, where their private lodging rooms are located on the same floor. The highest entrance floor, which was the fourth floor entrance is prepared for royalties and dignitaries, is where Yuusuke and his group previously stayed at.

Located on the 5th floor is a huge terrace with a large hall used to hold parties, the 6th floor is an atrium. Leading up to the 7th floor from the 4th floor, is a long staircase where the "fire god corps" the elites of the palace guards are stationed. Also the maids who specifically served the royalties uses these stairs.

The 8th floor is a vast audience room and a place to enjoy the sideshows. The 9th floor is the royal residence. It is lined up with various rooms and facilities such as bedrooms and educational rooms. And on the peak which is the 10th floor is the private quarters of the King. There is also a location for the concubines and singing princesses, but currently it is not being used much.

(TL: singing princesses aka prostitutes)

Amongst the maids gossip, currently King Esvobus does not have any dependable concubine surrounding him.

As Yuusuke descended from the carriage, he was greeted by Violet, who was accompanied by the crimson mantle flame gods corps, as she turned up with a completely familiar pigtail hairstyle.

"So you came, Yuusuke. Have you make your decision?"(Violet)

"Oh, It's been decided that it's an officer position."(Violet)

"Oic!"(Yuusuke)

Happily smiling, Violet immediately proceed to the signing of the contract documents she had prepared. Yuusuke only knew chinese characters, kanji, hiragana, and alphabets but for some odd reason, he seemed to understand the Lunar characters common language of Kaltcio, and is able to write his name in chinese and lunar characters.

"Ng? What's this, it looks like some sort of emblem."(Violet)

"It's my unique writing."(Yuusuke)

Violet tilted her head and stared blankly at Yuusuke, but after hearing that it was a character that was routinely used in the place where he and Sun lived, she replied with an "I see". Zeshald's culture study and thesis was not very detailed, thus Yuusuke was being vigilant so as to not get showered by a flood of difficult words.

"Good, very good. The formal appointment will be concluded with the audience with my father that you must attend by tomorrow. At present this should be good enough." (Violet)

Violet, as the person in charge, was wearing an atmosphere carrying the dignity of a princess. She turned around after Yuusuke handed over the official documents to her. Showing signs of instinctively correcting her attitude, Yuusuke understood that Violet's presence just did not fit her as a selfish princess.

"From today, you will be our country's soldier. Your rank will be greater than or equal to an officer in our country."(Violet)

"a, oh....."(Yuusuke)

"There are plans for placing you in a color, with special treatment."(Violet)

"That, I understand."(Yuusuke)

When Yuusuke was involuntarily pulled into a role of a 'funny man'*, Violet laughed happily.

(TL *: Tsukkomi)

"You're my favorite."(Violet)

"Is that alright, because of this....."(Yuusuke)

"Well, although there are various fellows who are jealous about this, I will be able to provide some assistance of my own."(Violet)

"Wait a minute!"(Krielov)

'I do not know if it is a good underling or a bad one', Yuusuke begin to have headaches as he thought about how Violet is abusing her power. Looking at his unwilling

appearance, Krielov put a stop to the sense of intimacy between them. Deep inside he secretly let out a sigh.

"Oh, yes. You now belong to the group "Darkness God Corps". Currently it only has one member, which is you."(Violet)

In the case of Yuusuke, his divine arts is special as it doesn't have specific type. There is also the problem of his hair color, thus, the existing squad captains don't want him attached to their squad, only leaving the choice of establishing a new squad for Yuusuke.

The four god corps of the palace, [Fire God Corps], [Water God Corps], [Earth God Corps], [Wind God Corps] are to rank next to the 5th god corps, like the black hair from the calendar of darkness, the [Darkness God Corps].

The calendar of darkness is part of the Kaltcio calendar which divides 1 year into 5 calendars with 17 months, and it refers to the special fifth calendar. The calendar of fire, the calendar of water, the calendar of earth, the calendar of wind, and lastly the calendar of darkness, from the calendar of fire to the calendar of wind, each of those calendars is composed of 4 months, '1 month is 20 days'.

The way of counting the calendars goes like this, e.g. Calendar of fire for the first day, [1st day of the fire month of Volnar] and for the last day, [20th day of the wind month of Volnar].

The Calendar of Darkness is the only special month without the 1 month counter, and it is known as the festival of freedom, which starts from the honor feast until the birth of the new year, when the financial statement of that year completes that type of calendar.

"The corps uniform will be prepared immediately."(Violet)

"Do I really have to wear a mantle as well?"(Yuusuke)

Violet answered "Of Course", while Yuusuke looks towards the uniform of the Fire God Corps.

Having a Palace official wearing a cheesy looking attire will bring shame to the nation. As there are ambassadors from various countries who come to visit, they could not afford exposing the 'Elites of the Palace' with a poor appearance.

So the flashiness of the palace god corps uniform also serve such a purpose, as Yuusuke acknowledges it with a shrug.

"I will be leaving now as I have some business to attend to, after this it would be great if you listen to this person for instructions."(Violet)

In the end, on that day, the three of them spent their time in a conversation in Yuusuke's room, until it was dinner time.

Following the orders of Violet, Yuusuke was guided by a servant to a corner of the upper floor in the palace. It had a spacious interior marble corridor with humongous windows which seem to stretch on forever. On the opposite of the wall were rooms lined up for

the personnel of the palace. (TL: 2nd floor of the palace for the officers)

"This innermost room is Mr.Yuusuke's."(Servant A)

"Thanks."(Yuusuke)

The room given to Yuusuke is the exactly same as the other god corp soldiers: a bed, a desk, a chair, bookshelves and a closet. It was mainly just the minimal furniture necessary for living here. To have additional furniture to decorate the room, one is supposed to purchase it with one’s own money.

"There isn't any windows...."(Yuusuke)

"Yes, the oil wood for lighting is granted in fixed amount along with your pay, if there is not enough of it, you are not allowed to accept more as compensation."(Servant A)

For daily necessities, if one requires more than what one is given, the soldier would have to purchase it by themselves at their own expenses. Yusuke mutters,'It seems like the palace soldiers doesn't have any preferential treatment at all,' but he was refuted by the explaining servant, "that is outrageously wrong."

"The comparison between the elites of the palace god corps and the general god corps, the compensation that they obtained is completely different."(Servant A)

"Ooh, so it's like that, is it?"(Yuusuke)

"Yes, the palace god corps soldiers are drawing 2 times more pay than the general god corps officers in charge after all-- ah....., I am so sorry for saying something rude." (Servant A)

"Don't mind it, don't mind it, you don’t need to apologize for such a thing....." (Yuusuke)

Due to the nature of Yuusuke speaking casually, the servant apologized shyly, as he had accidentally overstepped his boundaries. Standing in the front door was a curious onlooker, who heard Yuusuke and his fellow partner conversing in a humble talk, "No, not at all, it is I who should say so."

"What is making a racket here? This place isn't a playground."(Hivodir)

"Eh? Ah, Lord Hivodir."(Servant A)

Declaring in a dangerous tone, the red hair youth was wearing the uniform of the fire god corps. The servant respectfully called him Lord Hivodir. Looking at his posture, it seems like he is someone of great status, as Yuusuke nodded lightly.

"You are.... hmm I know, you're the new toy."(Hivodir)

"......?"(Yuusuke)

<< Leave us >> as Hivodir directed the servant with his hands. Bewildered by what happened, the servant bowed to the 2 people and left the scene. Hivodir smirked at Yuusuke, who was currently wearing the village clothes, and slowly took a step up and looked at Yuusuke's hair and the pupils of his eyes.

That rude staring attitude was making Yuusuke feel uncomfortable. Yuusuke let out a small frown when Hivodir started to investigate him.

"What's up?"(Yuusuke)

"Ho ho, It really is black ... ... It seems like the princess really likes it, but don't get too carried away with it."(Hivodir)

"Ha?"(Yuusuke)

"A lowly person like you, with a humble birth, doesn't deserve the cordial welcome of being part of the prestigious palace god corps."(Hivodir)

"At most, you just have to worry about her getting bored of you." Hivodir looked down on and smiled at Yuusuke, Yuusuke became angered by his words and returned with a glare. Lightning sparks could be seen as they glared at each other intensely, the air was filled with killing intent. It was currently in a state of, "Are thou going to fight me or not?”

During the middle of this critical situation, a rhythmical voice resounded through the hallways of the soldiers’ personnel room, which broke the intense situation.

"Ohh, Yuusuke! Have you looked at your room yet?"(Violet)

".....Violet?"(Yuusuke)

"Ooohh, My Princess. As lovely and cheerful as usual!"(Hivodir)

Violet came running down the hallway while waving her hands. Hivodir turned around and respectfully bowed towards her direction. Yuusuke felt a little discomfort while looking at Violet's panting appearance.

"Hivodir, you are here too. What were you guys talking about?"(Violet)

"Oh, I was somehow being threatened."(Yuusuke)

Hivodir, who was using his natural noble attitude, gracefully smiled in front of Violet. Yuusuke opened his eyes wide and stared at him. For a moment, Yuusuke wanted to expose him, but he held back. Seeing Violet's doubtful expression and clouded mind, he looked back towards Hivodir.

"Pffft, Buddy, as a man do you have no Pride!"(Hivodir)

"Oh? Pride, huh? What about you who is sneaking about intimidating people from the shadows?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke directly gave a rebuttal to Hivodir, making him increasingly confused. Although up until now, Hivodir had many experiences in giving those ‘would be’ rival aristocrat rookie officers an advance warning, but this is the first time he was faced with such a retaliating correspondent.

"Well, wait Hivodir. During that time at the square.... Yuusuke was, well, unexpectedly good at debating."(Violet)

"I am not trying to start a fight here, it's just that ——"(Hivodir)

Trying not to over worry about such things, in order to protect his pride, he replied, "It's nothing." ~~ Hiding the truth and intimidating a newcomer from the shadows!? Such a great unfolding of events, what an idiot! Don't underestimate a pro gamer! ~~ (Yuusuke's pov)

"That isn't all to my character."(Hivodir)

Yuusuke laughed at what he just said. Although both of them have acquired powers due to the previous live combat, it seems that Yuusuke have build up his will greatly, allowing him to be in a talkative mode and being able to see through Hivodir's plan to rouse him up.

Although, Hivodir does have the ability to see through one's talent, but somehow this is a very subtle situation.

"I understand and understood the incident just now, let bygones be bygones."(Violet)

Violet shrugged her shoulders with an exclamation of relief, as she pacified them. Yuusuke began to feel embarrassed, as he realized that he wasn't acting very mature. He turned away with his arms folded, trying to hide his embarrassment.

"Hivodir, you too. You are of a noble blood lineage whether you like it or not. Could you not over aggravate things?"(Violet)

"Ha ha, I did not do such absurd things. This Hivodir is prideful of being one of princess's fiance candidates."(Hivodir)

"Fiance?" Yuusuke's eyes start spinning around as he thought about it, while Hivodir was full of smiles due to the sense of superiority.

"How old are you?"(Yuusuke)

"Moh? From a little while ago your speech has been impolite. I am going to be 18 this year."(Hivodir)

"How about you?(Yuusuke)

"What, you don't know? I am 14."(Violet)

Shouldn't you not ask how old is a lady? Keeping in mind of that, Violet answered him. 14 years old and 18 years old, junior high and high school students, the age known as the entry to adulthood and the age of becoming an adult. Hearing that Yuusuke groaned.

"Unn, this is so weird."(Yuusuke)

"What is?"(Hivodir)

"What is weird?"(Violet)

Intrigued by Yuusuke's strange behavior and manner of speech, before anyone noticed, Hivodir was the same as Violet, as they were enjoying the conversation with Yuusuke.

Up until now there wasn't any friendship seen between those of noble status, and they are drawn into a completely new concept.

Chapter 13: The First Mission of the Darkness God Corps

The next morning ~~

Yuusuke's brand new lifestyle will begin from this point in his room, to indulge in laziness.

Travelling on the carriage the previous day, from dawn till dusk, had left him exhausted, and subsequently dealing with the trouble that happened within the palace didn't help either. Although he headed to bed early, due to not being accustomed to the environment, he couldn't sleep properly. When he finally slipped into his dreamland early in the morning, a heartless little demon kicked and spewed fire as she barged into his room.

"Yuusuke, It's time to wake up! This isn't the time for you to stay in bed, Wake up immediately!"(Violet)

".....Let---me---sleep---please--....."(Yuusuke)

"This is useless."(Violet)

"ummm....."(Yuusuke)

By dragging the bed, Yuusuke was being dragged out of his bed as he tumbled off, and he began to abandon his awareness to doze off again. While he was yawning and getting up lazily, Violet handed over a bundle of black cloth to him.

"This is your squad's uniform, hurry up and wear so i can see it."(Violet)

"Uniform?"(Yuusuke)

What he received was the uniform of the same design as the palace knights, although his was a black version. "Ah", Yuusuke let out, as he recalled that he was currently affiliated to the newly established Darkness god corps. As he looked back at the uniform before changing to it, it felt as though it was a cosplay costume.

"..... I will change into my clothes, but..."(Yuusuke)

"It's better to get dressed early."(Violet)

"No, it's not that...."(Yuusuke)

"What, are you being embarrassed to be seen naked as a man?"(Violet)

'You, as a woman, doesn't feel shy?' went through his mind, but he stopped and rethinked before saying anything, due to the fact that she is that violent, willful, granny-like princess. Feeling that he might be in for Violet's punishment game if he said that, Yuusuke slipped his hands through the sleeves of the new black uniform.

"Come to think of it, the thing that happened yesterday."(Violet)

"Yup?"(Yuusuke)

Yesterday, he was in a stare down competition with Hivodir before Violet came along. Using the opportunity, he diverted his anger and calmed himself down, that was when Violet, who was uncomfortable with that situation, started questioning. He was impressed by Violet being 'quite sharp' at things.

"I heard from the servant that was guiding you about Hivodir, so I rushed over in a hurry."(Violet)

"What, so that's what happened....."(Yuusuke)

It seems that Hivodir had been putting pressure on other younger god corps fiance candidates as a form of strategy. He himself has decent divine arts power within the fire god corps, with him also being the inheritor of a prestigious lineage, the Dukes of Volce, who has close ties to the royal family.

"Well, he has his own burden to carry. His family is one of the most prestigious noble families around."(Violet)

Violet was wearing an unhappy expression while speaking about it. It seems that at times she seemed to act like an adult, as if the common opinion that "the little girl grew up so fast" had some truth to it, thought Yuusuke . While thinking about it, he remembered about Sun's encouragement on accepting the government post.

"Hooho, you look pretty good in those clothes. Though the interior is meagre."(Violet)

"Shut up .... I am not going to wear the mantle, it seems very hard to move in it." (Yuusuke)

Yusuke requested for his armor to be kept at the minimum, so his protective gear was sewn with little reinforcements to keep it as lightweight as possible. He will makeup for it by strengthening the gear through his own customization. As he looked at his reflection wearing the Black god corps uniform on the full length mirror, Yuusuke actually began to feel that his new life is starting from today.

"Okay, Let's go to my father's location for an audience right now."(Violet)

"Ehhh, right now?"(Yuusuke)

"It's because now it's a delicate time, so it would be better if you quickly get through with it."(Violet)

It is said that those bureaucrats who knew about the audience are trying to interfere by making him adhere to formalities and procedures, which were added for the so called security purposes. Yuusuke was grateful for skipping all the complicated procedures, as he was rushing alongside Violet towards the audience hall.

"Hehehe..... My own knight...."(Violet speaking silently to herself)

"Ng? Did you say something?"(Yuusuke)

"Nope, I didn't say anything. Come on, let's hurry!"(Violet)

---the 8th Floor of Volance Palace, The Audience hall.---

The throne was sitting atop a raised podium in the inner part of the hall, with huge, heavy stone pillars lined up across the enormous hall. The lights illuminated the entire hall through the tall windows, which were positioned along the wall. There were countless servants waiting in the rooms, located behind the pillars.

Standing in front of the podium, were the various captains and vice captains of the palace god corps, while standing in line, next to the King, were the various ministers and aides.

"Hey, quickly, let's go in."(Violet)

"Wait a minute! I have no clue what the proper etiquettes are when standing before the king?"(Yuusuke)

"It's better to just be your proper self."(Violet)

"Proper...."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke nervously looked towards the throne, as Violet pulled him by hand right in front of the podium. The captains and vice captains of the gods corps that were sitting in rows saw his attire and were giving out complex expressions, "that doesn't seem to be usable".

"Apparently, it seems the rumors, spread within the god corps, are true...."

"Hmm, It seems that he is also known as the Princess's pet."

They were full of anticipation when they came here to see the unique divine arts which had made that gigantic tower, but as it seems, he might not be much of use, was what they were whispering amongst themselves. In the first place, only the captain of the fire god corps, Krielov had experienced Yuusuke’s power, while the rest of the captains, due to their disappointment, were showing complex expressions.

"In this occasion, you have fared well in responding to the call. Yuusuke, thou are to serve the King, and swear to become Fonclanc's knight, to protect the safety of the citizens."

"Erm, ... I swear?"(Yuusuke)

"Why does your answer seems like a question!?"(Violet)

"I told you that I have no clue what the proper etiquette is!"(Yuusuke)

Seeing Yuusuke and Violet whispering softly, the minister in charge was showing a troubled face as he turned towards the king to seek his approval.

King Esvobus waved his hands lightly as if saying <<it's all good, let's get on with it >>. He looked towards his beloved daughter, Violet, whom he always pampered. The minister shook his head and realized it's useless to debate about it, thus diving straight into the appointment ceremony.

The tray, containing the coat of arms, proof of a palace knight, lies next to the throne. King Esvobus slowly stood up and took the coat of arms into his hands. With Violet giving a slight push from behind, Yuusuke walked up the podium and knelt in front of the king.

Thus the King attached the coat of arms onto his uniform, and from this point onwards, Yuusuke was officially recognized as one of the knights, thus concluding the appointment ceremony without any incidents. After the ceremony, there was a song of the 4 great gods being sang to swear loyalty to the king. Skipping various parts of the procedures, making the appointment ceremony simple, the main point of the ceremony was to get the coat of arms that is bestowed by the king.

Amongst the captains of each corps who were looking at that appointment ceremony, yet again it seemed like another selfish request from the princess, but it seems that there wasn't any need to get involved as they did not have a problem with it.

The recent favorite of the Princess was this black haired youth who had been bestowed with the coat of arms by King Esvobus, and it seems that there were reports of him having a close relationship with Zeshald. Thus, King Esvobus was driven by the feeling of curiosity and listened to the various stories he might have had.

"Yuusuke, are you --"(King Esvobus)

"Yes?"(Yuusuke)

As he was retreating away from the throne, King Esvobus called out to him, and Yuusuke stopped in place as though his body was floating. However, it seemed that King Esvobus was hesitating to say something, and closed his mouth --

".....nothing, forget about it."(King Esvobus)

Although he wanted to call out Zeshald’s name in this occasion, he held back. Holding this thought back, he held down his hands without saying a word.

"Ahh that was so nerve wracking. However, it seems that the King felt like an ordinary old man."(Yuusuke)

"Wahaha! Well, my dad does give off that kind of feeling. Did you see how much scheming those bureaucrats were doing?"(Violet)

After the appointment ceremony, Yuusuke followed Violet towards the resting rooms of the palace knights. As Yuusuke is leading the newly inaugurated group known as the Darkness god corps within the palace, he had to show his face as a new establishment to the palace knights. He was brought through the knights dining hall and bypassed the porch.

Incidentally, the carriage and horse that belonged to Zeshald, which Yuusuke had used to ride here, has been delivered back to Rufk.

"During the afternoon, you will need to head over to the construction site of the

fortress, as it will become an important facility. For the time being just go and take a round trip to look at the site." (Violet)

"That's great, but is it okay for you to guide me?(Yuusuke)

"It's alright right? That's what the color is for, special treatment."(Violet)

"....although, it will be troublesome if I were to get entangled with someone like Hirvodir again."(Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke complained about it, Violet seemed to be having a lot of fun as she brought them back into the palace. As Violet was proceeding ahead, right in front of his line of sight, Yuusuke turned his head and looked behind him due to a difference in interest, as he began to feel that the introduction was tedious, but he returned to what he was doing.

In that manner, he remembered to bear in mind that it is his establishment, thus turning back. Finally he arrived at the last resting room of the god corps. Compared to the royal knights' pointlessly luxurious waiting room, this room seemed to be pretty simple, or in order words, functional, as it emits an atmosphere of 'some sort of tavern'.

Although they were in the same type of room located within the palace, Yuusuke found it peculiar that the upper floors and lower floors had a lot of differences in dignification..

"It seems like this place is as shabby as usual."(Violet)

"Well, isn't this Lady Violet! What kind of business do you need today in such a place?"

Laying down half slanted on the sofa, the commander-like soldier of the god corps jumped up in a hurry to greet Violet. The rest of the soldiers scattered the gambling bills off the table, hid their wines and began to form up in line.

"Yusuke, select people from amongst this group."(Violet)

"Eh? What do you mean?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke tried to protest, as there wasn't much information given to him for the selection, whereas Violet on the other hand, dismissed his protest saying,"Currently the newly founded darkness god corps only have you. For the time being, take some of these god corps soldiers as subordinates. In the future, when you go on missions, you will at least have some underlings to utilize.”

"Such an important thing should have been told before hand....."(Yuusuke)

"Setting the missions aside, in any case you will still need to have subordinates for the current construction of the fortress."(Violet)

For the construction of the fortress, wouldn't it be easy to just instantly create it, like the observation tower in the gate square? Yuusuke showed a shrug while looking at Violet.

After the completion of this mission, it seems that he will have to become a special person who changes the cuisines for Violet under the pretense of a "Special mission", but this time around, for the sake of appearance, he had to bring along some

underlings.

"I can confidently say that you will be able to select about five appropriate people to bring along."(Violet)

"Appropriate?"(Yuusuke)

While the two of them were conversing with each other, the god corps soldiers were all curious about the black uniform of 'the newly founded establishment, Knights of Darkness god corps'. Hearing that they are able to get chosen and become one of the subordinates, they began to straighten their posture.

If one is being recruited by the palace knights, although the work is much tougher, one can expect better compensation even if there is easier work. Without fail they began to smile, trying to appeal their eagerness of wanting to be selected.

Yuusuke took into consideration the type of personnel that may be required during this mission. First he needed a wind arts user who could speed up the carriage and a water art user who could rejuvenate the horses. In case if the return trip happened late at night, it would be good to have a fire art user who could light the way. Other than that, he also wanted a wind user who had experience in communication, in order to send transmissions to the construction site and a water user who could attack in case of a battle.

The commander of the God corps is guy whose age is around 30 years old. He is one of the chosen fire art user, his name is Vermeer.

Another person, who is in the same God corps and holding the position of the vice captain, is a man in his mid 20s. He is an attack type water art user, his name is Shaheed.

Next is a lady in her early 20s. She is a healer type water art user, her name is Aisha.

Another lady who is in her late teens. She is a communication type wind art user, her name is Isotta.

Next is the guy in his mid 20s, who tried to hide the gambling bills just now. He is a wind art user, his name is Fonke.

Thus, these selected five will be accompanying Yuusuke, as his underlings, to the construction site. After each and everyone of them introduced themselves to Yuusuke, the group was disbanded for lunch. They were to gather at the porch to board a carriage and set off for a mission after lunch.

"Well, for the time being we have to settle our lunch. Will you head back upstairs Violet?"(Yuusuke) (TL: it's weird when he says will violet head back upstairs)

"Yea, it's a pity as I have a promise with my father."(Violet)

As it was a condition to perform the appointment ceremony earlier in the morning, they had to eat their lunch separately. Violet tried using her coaxing voice, but, as it didn't work, she ended up taking the easier route of having a meal. 'What a foolish parent', as Yuusuke thought while worrying about the future of Violet.

"I have to say that. In the future will you be either a captivating queen or a devilish princess."

"What was that about? No .... wait, maybe it actually sounded pretty "cool"....?"

As the friendly conversation between Yuusuke and Violet filled the atmosphere, the soldiers who were all looking at them were silent in amazement. Yuusuke, who realized that they were being stared at, began to inquire Vermeer, as he was the eldest amongst his underlings. Without reservation, Vermeer begins to ask a question to him.

"Erm it's nothing much..... listening to how you called the princess, we were wondering what's the relationship between the captain and the princess."(Vermeer)

"Ah~...."(Yuusuke)

The way the captain called out to her seemed a little awkward, thought Vermeer. As Yuusuke began to consider that "Certainly it might be pretty bad to address her without honorifics". Even Hivodir, who is one of Violet's fiance candidate and holds a higher social status also called her princess.

"Lady Violet...."(Yuusuke)

"Yes?"(Violet)

Yuusuke tried to call Violet with a title, but hearing her name, Violet tilted her head and asked, "Yes?".

"Violet! Violet! Violet!Violet!"(Yuusuke)

"Wa!? What’s up with you so suddenly?"(Violet)

"Nothing, I was getting rid of the uncomfortable feeling, after uttering something in front of your name."(Yuusuke)

".....Is my name as disgusting as strong vodka?"(Violet)

It had become a habit. On top of that, even the person herself had given him special treatment, thus Yuusuke decided that it would be better to leave it as it is. Thus, he faced his underlings and answered, "Well, it's that kind of relationship."

Afternoon~~

"Hurry up and finish your mission so you can come back early."(Violet)

"Yeah, yeah..."(Yuusuke)

Violet sent off Yuusuke and his 5 underlings who boarded a god corp's carriage. Departing from the palace, they headed towards the direction of the planned construction site for the fortress. "Gear Hawk Fortress" The fortress is built on the plains, which is facing the borders of Blue garden. It's foundation is about half way complete, and even the building section has been 1/3 assembled. Although it is not yet a fully functional fortress, it still can be used a base to monitor the border, by deploying

some soldiers and bringing supplies in.

"I heard that the captain built that gigantic tower instantaneously. Will you be building the fortress in the same way?"(Vermeer)

"We will have to see. As long as there is enough materials it would not be impossible." (Yuusuke)

"In...incredible..... I would like to see.....the building process."(Isotta)

As Yuusuke answered Vermeer's question, Isotta clam her hands in front of her chest while directing her sparkling eyes toward Yuusuke.

The materials required for the fortress should be sufficient as Shadeed explained that he was previously attached as security to the site, and has returned from duty just 10 days ago. During the change of guards, they had brought large amount of materials along with replacements for duty.

Since there was enough materials to make this customization job easy, Yuusuke began to relax comfortably, as they headed towards the site.

"Captain, we can see the site."(Vermeer)

"And, I will contact them to inform about our arrival..... to let us in, okay?"(Isotta)

Even though the Gear hawk fortress is in the middle of construction, you could still see a massive, dignified silhouette built out of cobblestone, nestled in the middle of the plains. Wooden scaffolding extended out on both sides of the wall. The cobblestones that were piled up in regular intervals on the wall could also be seen.

Although the height is just midway, it is already 30m tall. Fortress from the edge to the edge was probably around 50m in length. It is such a huge building.

"Ah, ehhh..... this is weird"(Isotta)

"What's up, Isotta"(Vermeer)

Using her fingers to tap her head while trying to flap around restlessly, she tilted her neck as it seems like she was talking to herself. Vermeer, who was on the driver seat, slowed the carriage down and he turned his head around and asked.

"Ah, it's just that..... the wind… I can't seem to contact anyone."(Isotta)

Being unable to contact the fortress or the town, Isotta was bewildered as she answered. In the mean time, the carriage seemed to have arrived at the fortress ground. Pieces of wood and materials were scattered across the grounding site, and only a large piece of cloth turned up by flapping in the wind.

".....this is weird, it's too quiet."(Shadeed)

Shaheed felt uncomfortable, as the atmosphere on the site was totally different from the time when he was last here. As it was pretty much noon, the number of workers should be scuffling around the scaffolding and the site. Fonke brought the carriage alongside the entrance of the fortress, and using his wind arts, he covered the body of

the carriage with a wind wall.

"Fuee~~ good heavens, is everyone on their breaks? Though I want a cup of fruit sake."(Fonke)

"Hey, we're in a middle of a mission. Be careful with your unscrupulous behavior in front of the captain."(Aisha)

Being warned by the serious Aisha, Fonke shrugged it off with an "ahh~scary".

"Anyway we should disembark, have you heard anything about this, captain?" (Vermeer)

"Nope, for the time being..... doesn't t the atmosphere here seem weird to you?" (Yuusuke)

While Vermeer led the disembarking of the carriage, Yuusuke began inquiring Shaheed. Shaheed started to explained that during the time he was here, work was always ongoing till sundown. Since this is such a bright time and there wasn't anyone around, he warned us to be vigilant.

"Alright, then everyone lookout around your surroundings--" (Yuusuke)

-- Something is aiming at you from the back!-- (Reifold)

Yuusuke gave out a warning order, as he heard something that sounded familiar. Reflexively turning his head behind, he saw that, standing in front of the entrance of the site next to where the soils have been piled up, there was a green hair man dressed in a similar uniform of that of the god corps swinging his arms upwards.

The man’s clothes began to flutter unnaturally and intensely. The dust around his feet began to dance as his hair fluttered. He swung up his arms to a familiar posture. It was the same stance when that green hair guy, whom I encountered in the gate square, released a wind blade. ~pov yuusuke

Yuusuke instantly spit out a command and opened his customization menu. Next, he created a customized earth wall right in front of his feet. Right as the wall appeared, the green hair man released his wind blade simultaneously. *Slicing sound* As he heard the sound of the earth being sliced, the top half of the wall became an inverted triangle.

"Wha- What's going on!"(Isotta)

"A Wind Blade? Where did it appear from?"

"It came from there, the entrance next to the soil hill! I'll create another wall, quick gather around me!"(Yuusuke)

In a kneeling position, he began to create another wall while increasing its divine arts resistance parameter. A light effect surrounded the earth wall. Meanwhile, after releasing the 2nd blade , the man began to flee from the field of vision of Yuusuke's party. But immediately after the wall was formed, Isotta’s shriek reverberated while, at the same time, Shaheed shot a water ball.

The opponent side also had another guy who poised ready to release another wind blade. While the wind blade was diverted to counter the water ball attack released by Shaheed, Yuusuke's party immediately jumped back into cover behind the wall, as remnants of the attack left scratches on the ground.

The wind blade, which was released from the vicinity of the entrance, showed that it even had enough power to pierce through the increased divine arts resistance of the earth wall.

"This is bad! That fella is from "Wind Troupe"! Blue garden's elite unit!"(Fonke)

"Why are they here in such a place like this ..... tsu!"(Vermeer)

"Oh no.....! Well then, the people who had been working here should all be...."(Aisha)

The face of Fonke and Vermeer changed as they realized who their opponent was. Aisha's face turned blue while she covered her mouth.

"If we remain like this, we will be sniped. Let's retreat into the fortress."(Vermeer)

"Alright! For the time being I'll leave the commanding to Vermeer!"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke created a tunnel-like wall towards the fortress, and, following Vermeer's orders, everyone retreated to safety. "That's a good decision," said Vermeer, as he admired Yuusuke’s decision.

Preparing for an ambush, Shaheed led the pack while aiming at the top of the fortress with his divine arts.

The wind blades, one by one, hit the wall of the tunnel and broke it. Meanwhile Yuusuke managed to respond by repairing the walls in succession with his customization.

"Isotta, Search for the enemies"(Vermeer)

"Ye,Yes...."(Isotta)

Shaheed set himself up by the side of the door as he guarded the entrance to the fortress. Isotta began using her wind to search the compound of the fortress to ascertain whether there was anyone lurking inside.

At the same time, Yuusuke created a few layers of wall, making it like onion, and was holding up against the relentless assaults of the wind blades. It seemed that they couldn't be compared to the blades of the man whom he fought in the gate square. This is the power of the divine arts these so called "elites" of the divine arts warriors wield. Yuusuke realized that his overconfidence with his abilities have been tamed by such power.

~~ Although the wall of earth would hold up, but for the lowest category of divine arts, the wind arts, to be able to do so much damage....~~(pov Yuusuke)

"Ther, there isn't any.....presences of enemies"(Isotta)

"Alright Captain! Let's head inside the fortress!"(Vermeer)

As they rushed through the entrance without a door, Yuusuke touched the wall of the fortress to check if there was chime indicating the possibility of customization. The moment he heard the chime, he opened his customization menu and blocked all exits that seem likely for intrusion.

After all the intrusion paths were blocked, he further solidified the stones of that make up the wall into an impregnable fortress by increasing its strength and resistance against divine arts.

Gear Hawk Fortress, although it was in the middle of construction, it was splendidly enormous. Isotta’s search radius begin to expand as it was a extremely narrow indoors, and the blockade made it possible to move around. she began to search the basement and top two floors for the existence of enemies.

It seems that there is a wind art jamming all contacts to the city, thus there won't be any reinforcement coming. Tomorrow, if we can hold on until tomorrow, Violet will have sensed something amiss with Yuusuke's party and will come with reinforcements. She might even send the god corps out after 14 hours.

For the time being, Yuusuke's party moved to the nearest room to barricade themselves and begin planning on the counter measures.

"This has become a terrible first mission.....”(Yuusuke)

Chapter 14: Gearhawk fortress

“How is that?”(Wind troupe guy A)

“It’s useless after all. In the end I barely managed to scratch it.”(Wind troupe guy B)

Hearing that the wind user, who had the most penetrating arts, gave up, the leader of the elite group of Blue Garden sighed, groaning without saying anything as he hit the outer wall of the fortress that stood before him.

The appearance of the strange structure around the fortress was not in their calculations. Still, this structure has achieved “the intended result”.

“We cannot call this situation resolved, can we?”(Wind troupe guy C)

“We are not done yet. We have to remove all traces of ourselves first.”(Wind troupe guy A)

Jamming the transmissions by using wind arts did not take much time to set up. However, the walls of the fortress were immune to the slicing and stabbing damage of the wind attacks. Although, the walls of the fortress were not that durable during the attack they carried out a few days ago.

“It was the job of that black haired guy after all.”(Wind troupe guy B)

“I’m afraid you are right. I heard that his divine arts are quite unusual…”(Wind troupe guy A)

“It was an oversight of the intelligence guys. Shall we file a complaint?”(Wind troupe guy C)

“It’s futile. Without doubt, the water troupe guys will back them up.”(Wind troupe guy A)

The problematic upper echelons of Blue Garden were the few water arts users residing in the fortress city, Paula. With their ability to heal people and purify the water, they were highly regarded in the social structure of the city. The symbolic head of the Blue Garden was also a water arts user. All of this provided water arts users with a lot of influence in this country.

Divine arts militia organizations, that existed within Blue Garden at that time, were equivalent to the god corps of the Fonclank kingdom. The wind arts intelligence unit has recently achieved great fame after successfully luring Zeshald over to their side. Having obtained a capable leader and instructor, the water arts users were favorable towards these spies.

The Wind troupe, whose main forte was assassinations and guerilla tactics, did not leave traces of their action in the enemy country. Their actions were focused on bringing serious damage over a long period of time, yet these actions were perceived as harassment and provocation.

However, their opponent did not react rashly. There were no actions, leading to their destruction. There were no signs of riots or coup-d’état. This lead to the voices of

doubt, regarding the efficiency of the actions of the wind troupe, being raised in their own country.

This time the calls were not only to lower the budget of the group, but also to change their strategic approach and to cause more direct damage from now on.

Thus, if the attack on the fortress could be "doubtlessly" linked to the wind troupe, Blue Garden's government would become unable to brush off protests against the offensive action within Fonclank territory, as it did now, saying, "Without evidence, that is nothing but baseless rumors".

If the truth came to light, other countries would protest against it, if they continued their agenda as they did now. Because of this, they could not afford to leave any evidence behind.

"Well, we should leave the matters to the group inside, for now."(Wind troupe guy A)[i]

"I wonder how successful will they be…?"(Wind troupe guy B)

Answering this to his colleague, who seemed to be optimistically thinking ahead, the leader of the wind troupe answered like that while admiring the blockade (wall that was blocking off) of the Gearhawk fortress.

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On the first floor of the Gearhawk fortress, six people, hiding in one of the rooms on the right side passage, were discussing about how to escape their current situation. For these guys, a fight against the elite of the Blue Garden was reckless. Therefore, they had to hold out against the siege of the fortress until reinforcements arrived. But to do that, they first had to secure rations and drinkable water.

"We can't do anything about the provisions we have left at our carriage. It seems the only possibility is to search for the food storage of the fortress. "(Vermeer)

"The food storage room and the well should be located in the basement. I think there are stairs leading to it in the kitchen."(Shaheed)

"Alright then, let's check the basement together."(Yuusuke)

Listening to Vermeer's and Shaheed's conversation, Yuusuke decided to secure the provisions. Under the current circumstances, Yuusuke also decided to block off all other passages in preparation for the siege.

"I think it is better to gather resources such as medical supplies, lamp oil, and wood. Securing the everyday goods will also help in maintaining morale."(Aisha)

"Agreed. I can't go on without any alcohol under these circumstances!"(Fonke)

Going along with Aisha's proposal, the group agreed that, alongside food, they should also gather other daily necessities and goods, which would be necessary in case of a prolonged siege. Having decided on their goal, the group agreed to split up to search the first and second floors. Just in case, they warned Fonke to share the alcohol should he find some and not keep it all for himself.

“U-uhm… The 2nd floor and the basement has not yet been scanned for enemies, therefore…”(Isotta)

“Alright, please search for them.”(Yuusuke)

Hesitantly bringing up the dangers of their search, Isotta promptly performed her job.

“To deal with everything like this, you sure act like someone selected by the palace.”(Vermeer)

To Vermeer, gifted with an acute sense of danger, actions like transferring of command to subordinates was something he was not accustomed to. In light of this, he valued Yuusuke’s quick wits very highly. Yuusuke replied with a smile, saying, “It just happened by chance,” while thinking about the voice that warned him on the oncoming attack.

[“That voice, it had to be that sly Reifold…”](Yuusuke)

Yuusuke could not comprehend why that man, who was supposed to be a Blue Garden spy, let him know about the danger. The time that Sun was apprehended, and the time when he was troubled by the order to join the military service, that man just appeared out of nowhere, gave Yuusuke some valuable advice, and disappeared immediately afterwards.

[“What is his aim?”](Yuusuke)

Yuusuke’s doubts increased even more as he thought of it, deep in his mind.

“I wonder what happened to the people who were in the fortress…?”(Aisha)

“I don’t know. Did you sense any human presence, Isotta?”(Fonke)

“Y-Yes, but the air is unusually fresh. It was probably ventilated.”(Isotta)

Hearing Isotta’s reply, Fonke clicked his tongue and scratched his head, while Aisha cast her eyes down, scowling. Unable to comprehend the meaning behind Isotta’s words, Yuusuke asked for an explanation.

“What does that mean?”(Yuusuke)

“Uhm…”(Isotta)

According to the explanation, human presence always remained in places that were previously inhabited. It was especially true for an indoor environment, where traces could be found even after dozens of days have passed since the place became uninhabited.

By the state of this air, especially in an indoor space, where the air was stale, one could tell how long has it been since humans have left this place. Therefore it was very strange that there was no such human presence in this fortress. The only conclusion was that the air was forcefully changed.

“With that said… the air in this fortress was probably cleaned using wind arts…”(Isotta)

“In short, these guys have entered the fortress before, and cleaned out the stench of blood after finishing up their job.”(Fonke)

Fonke has frankly stated the conclusions, which meant that the people, who were in the fortress, were already dead.

“As we have talked on the road, around ten days ago there was a material delivery and duty rotation to this fortress. I think that at least by then none of this have had happened yet.” (Shaheed)

“Regular communications were probably faked by those guys.”(Yuusuke)

Assuming they were planning to escape from the fortress by themselves, thinking about the clean air, which the fortress was filled with, this situations was by no means one where they could call this air “fragrant”.

However, after Yuusuke has blocked off all the invasion routes into the fortress, for some time the group could hear the sounds from the attacks that the wall at the front entrance has been suffering. As the wall stood strong and the attacks had ceased, Shaheed noted that the cage they have built out of the fortress was beyond the expectations of their attackers.

“Probably captain’s divine arts are too much even for those guys to deal with.”(Shaheed)

“Is that so… However it was barely enough.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke’s body shuddered as he remembered the power of the wind troupe’s wind blades. Just being grazed by one of them in the shoulder would lead to a serious injury.

“I am confident that direct hit from one of them would mean the end to the victim.”(Yuusuke)

Despite talking about all these things everyone decided that they should first secure their food and water. Having decided that, the group set out to look for a kitchen. Isotta was responsible for scouting for enemies and the mobility of the group and Fonke was satisfied with being in the middle of the group. As Shaheed was skilled in diverting enemy attacks during critical moments of the fight, he and Vermeer were in the vanguard, while Yuusuke formed the rear guard along with Aisha.

“Weren’t your fire arts not fit for combat, Vermeer?”(Yuusuke)

“I can create enough fire to use for a light, but it lacks the power to be used as a weapon.”(Vermeer)

Because of this, Vermeer was appointed to be the light bearer and Shaheed was the only person in the group with any real offensive power. Yuusuke had opened the customization menu, so that he would be prepared to use the pavement of the floor to create protective walls and defend everyone in the group.

The dining room near the kitchen was destroyed, with tables and chairs thrown around in chaos, and the dried remains of the food scattered all over the floor. There were signs of the stone being scraped off by the wind blades in the passage, but the state of the room was especially bad.

“It seems they carried out their attack during the meal. A lot of people have died here.”

Vermeer pointed towards the mass of broken tables and chairs in the room. The floor, the walls, and even the ceiling, were abundant with marks left by wind blades, accompanied by a lot of bloodstains. A strange smell they had not felt before, floated in the room. It was a mixture of rotting food and the stench of blood.

“They should have thrown the corpses into the basement.”

As Fonke said that, Isotta, who was standing near the entrance, suddenly jerked her shoulders. A construction of such a fortress required an equally large number of personnel. If it was outside, they could have hidden the bodies by burying them. Thinking about the fact that they have yet had to find a body in this fortress – the very thought seemed to be impossible.

„Is everything alright, Isotta?”(Yuusuke)

“Y-yes…. I – I am alright.”(Isotta)

Looking at Isotta, who gave her reply in a tensed voice, while continuing to tense her body, Yuusuke thought to himself:

[“Why would such an ordinary child become a member of the god corps?”]

Yet again, he had no time to think about it as long as his attention had to be concentrated on the investigation of the basement.

“… The cover is tightly shut. We also need a key.”(Vermeer)

“I’ll open it right now. Let me through.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke opened the tightly locked trap hole into the basement within three seconds. Unlocking it through customization was way faster than using the earth arts.

“Wow, that sure is one useful divine art! Aren’t you invincible in close combat?”(Vermeer)

Vermeer admired Yuusuke as Fonke pulled the handle of the trapdoor, halfway opening it. As they put the light into the gap, they saw a stairway, descending into the darkness. Shadows of doubt appeared on Fonke’s face as he was lifting the trapdoor by the shape resembling a handle.

“……”(Fonke)

“What happened, Fonke?”(Aisha)

“…Nothing, it’s just that something is bothering me.”(Fonke)

After saying that, Fonke scratched his upper lip as he glanced at Isotta. The girl was standing still, staring at the crack as she was scanning the basement for potential enemies. Noticing that Aisha looked at Isotta with a worried expression.

What’s happened? … Did you hear something?”(Aisha)

“Isotta?”(Fonke)

"I-I'm all right… But, I think I sense the enemy. There's three of them… I feel the aura of the wind arts users. And… I think I also feel a presence of a prisoner…"(Isotta)

There appeared to be three wind arts users, likely the members of the wind troupe, as well as two prisoners. She finished the report by saying that she did not detect any enemy in between the door and the storehouse.

As Yuusuke did not know to what the extent the wind arts could provide the user with the information about the enemy, he judged the severity of the situation from Isotta's pale face and shaking shoulders. Yuusuke speculated that either the wind users had very strong wind arts at their disposal or the prisoners were in a very bad situation.

"Have they noticed us?"(Yuusuke)

"No- No they haven't noticed us yet… Uhm… half of them… are sleeping."(Isotta)

"Thinking that they have locked themselves in, these guys took a chance to sleep in the beds. Or maybe this is all a trap?"(Yuusuke)

"Captain, did you notice any kind of trap attached to the door? For example, something connected to the locking mechanism?"(Vermeer)

To answer Vermeer's question, Yuusuke opened his customization menu and checked the customization history. He examined the lock part. As he used [Rotate] and [Enlarge][ii] functions, which were part of his ability, he noticed a sphere like contraption that would break if he unlocked the door normally and turned the handle.

As the ball was made of metal, it was sure to make a loud noise as it fell down the stairs.

"I see… So there was a device installed after all."(Vermeer)

Vermeer and the rest of the company were either shocked or amazed at the way that Yuusuke's divine art unlocked the door, bypassing the locking mechanism.

["We are at the advantage from here on"]

Feeling that they have the advantage, the group started discussing on how to deal with the enemies in the underground. As half of them were sleeping, now was a good chance for an attack.

"Our attack will be most effective this way."

"We can decide the battle if we attack all at once."

"If I attacked from close range, I think even my water ball could kill a person."(Shaheed)

As they had no chances of winning in a divine arts battle, thinking that his squad would manage to clutch a win in close combat, Yuusuke strengthened the daggers they carried for self-protection. Using his customization, he bestowed various enchantments on these daggers which were already strengthened through the use of the earth arts.

In the Item Customize Create System, which was the basis for Yuusuke's Customize

Create ability, when customizing clothes, map items, or items such as food, the user was allowed a certain degree of freedom. Still, originally this system was meant to customize the weapons and the defensive items of the user.

Therefore, when customizing the armor class items, Yuusuke had an extensive amount of options. This meant, that even if it could be considered cheating, Yuusuke could raise the strength and power of these items as much as he wanted.

Offensive power, stamina, divine arts power, accuracy, body strength, agility – Yuusuke could add special effects like that to the item that was customized. Thus, Yuusuke enchanted those daggers to their customization limit. Having finished with the weapons, Yuusuke went on to enhance the accessories with various body ability raising perks. After a while he came to realize something.

["I didn't expect this myself…"]

He murmured his innermost thoughts as he was handing out the daggers, with their offensive abilities customized, to three members of his squad.

"?! Whoa, this baby is amazing!"(Fonke)

"It's mysterious, I felt my strength surging just by touching the dagger. My body also feels lighter."(Shaheed)

"I can understand weapon and ability enhancement through the divine arts, but I have never heard of the weapon itself giving these effects to their user. What kind of a divine art do you really have?"(Vermeer)

"It's a divine art of the Evil god."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke jokingly answered Vermeer's question, as he decided to keep the truth behind his ability hidden. Vermeer smiled broadly and left this matter aside, without further questioning Yuusuke's ability.

"Captain, this is your first mission, right? Do you have any experience in combat?"(Vermeer)

"None. I had a brawl in the game plaza before, but this is my first time facing a real battle."(Yuusuke)

Vermeer nodded, acknowledging Yuusuke's reply, and began disseminating the strategy. According to it, Yuusuke and the two girls would stay behind at the entrance, while the three guys went in to attack. After he gave a sign, he wanted the three of them to go in and support the vanguard. Yuusuke, being a complete novice at these kind of things, agreed to it, leaving all the decisions up to the more experienced Vermeer and the rest of his group.

After turning the light off, and silently, fully opening the basement hatch, Fonke enveloped himself, Vermeer, and Shaheed with a mobility wind aura. Afterwards, the three of them silently disappeared into the darkness of the stairway. During the execution of their battle plan, Isotta was continuously monitoring the status of the enemy in the basement.

In the meantime, Yuusuke was customizing his cloak, leaving customization of the

clothes, other party members wore, for when they returned.

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"Uh-uhm, I'm done."(Isotta)

Isotta's face twitched as she asked Yuusuke for further orders. There were no echoes of battle nor were there any cries of death. It was as if the wind troupe, who were hidden in the basement, met their deaths silently. But, as they received the signal from Vermeer's group, they descended to the basement.

"…mhm?"(Yuusuke)

As they were descending down the stairs, Yuusuke frowned at the strange smell that has assaulted them. This smell was different from the smell of blood that was mixed in the air at the dining room above. This corridor was filled with an awful smell, which was frequent in wet, damp places.

After climbing down into the basement, Yuusuke's group joined up with the Vermeer's group. Leaving the stairwell, the path became a bit wider as corridor expanded to both sides. At the right hand side, four doors were positioned at the sides of the corridor, and three barrels were stacked up at the end of the passage. On the left hand side corridor widened immediately, and a construction, which was probably a water well, could be seen.

"Don't you think it ended too quickly?"

"It feels wrong. Honestly it was dangerous. If we didn't have these daggers, we would have suffered damage as well."

"It's to the right", continued Vermeer.

Aisha nodded to the fire arts user and entered the designated storage room. A question mark popped over Yuusuke's head, as he was unable to understand what was happening between them.

"I asked her to heal the prisoners that we freed", explained Vermeer.

Before long, sobs and cries of a woman could be heard from the storage room.

"Were their injuries that heavy…?"(Yuusuke)

"Their injuries are not serious, but this is not the worst problem right now."(Vermeer)

Vermeer did not go into the details, as he answered Yuusuke's question. Isotta appeared from behind the corner, with her eyes cast down. She entered the room, carrying the water from the well that Aisha asked her to bring for the treatment of the prisoners. Fonke scratched his head, thinking about the future.

The atmosphere within the group was heavy, similarly to the stench that filled the air around them. Shaheed, who has been the only one to remain silent, started to speak.

"Captain still looks young and weak, but judging from the fight at the plaza and the accusations of that scoundrel, I think that he is mature enough for this."

"Eh? What is happening? Despite everything, I am an adult."(Yuusuke)

"Oh, is that really true? Well, it might have been strange of me to be considerate about that."

"Well, I guess it's my bad. You seemed to be too honest, Captain. I feared it might give you a trauma."

Without any eagerness, the three directed Yuusuke to the room before him. The emergency food supplies were untouched, but moved to a certain part of the room. The freed up space was respectively separated into a space for the wind art users of the wind troupe and a space for the corpses of their prisoners.

"Three prisoners were held here. Two of them are being healed by Aisha further inside."

"And the last one…?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke glanced at a pile on the floor that was covered with a cloth. It was not hard for him to guess that a corpse of the third prisoner was lying under it. Fonke stretched his hand towards the cloth and looked at Yuusuke as if confirming that he should uncover it.

"Well, this is not a thing I should be intentionally showing…"

For the elite soldiers that primarily stayed around the palace and usually avoided the dirty work, knights of god corps knew little of the actual work out in the field. The prisoner's corpse that Vermeer's group found and shown to the captain of a god corps of the palace, most likely belonged to a female god corps member, a captain in fact, who was captured during the defense of the fortress.

"Uh…"(Yuusuke)

At first sight, it looked like the body was clothed in red colored spotted pattern camouflage clothes – the body was covered in deep red bruises and skin tears. Although the body was lying in a usual posture, her hands and legs were bent in an unnatural places. There were no fingernails on the remaining fingers of the hand and feet of the corpse.

The woman parts of the body were both sliced off, the nose was broken, and the jaw had an unusual shape. Her disheveled blue hair was tangled into a tight clot and had some bleached yellow powder stuck to them.

"…How cruel."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke did not avert his eyes until the body was covered again. This made an expression of admiration float up on Vermeer's face. Such gruesome sight was quite rare during the times of peace, but when fighting has started, such scenes were not a strange sight on the field.

"…"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke suddenly thought of something and touched part of the corpse that was jutting out from under the cloth.

Ding Dong

"?! It can't be…"(Yuusuke)

"Captain…?"

Without answering the doubting calls of his group, Yuusuke opened the customization menu, feeling that he shouldn't be doing this. In the menu he saw the image of the mangled body, but, by manipulation the various parameters, he could heal the skin tears and bruises, and even fix the broken bones.

Although most of the work included adjusting the damage sliders of various parts to their zero values, since his task concerned tampering with a human body, it still took a considerable amount of time. Finally, in the screen of the customization window, a reasonably muscular, naked body of a blue haired young woman could be seen.

Yuusuke, surrounded by an aura peculiar to the activation of the divine art, moved his finger in the air as if performing some sort of special ceremony, and was stared at by Vermeer's company, who were bewildered, unable to understand the meaning of their captain's actions. Isotta, having come to relay the information from the other two prisoners, whom were now healed and calmed down by Aisha, was also watching this spectacle from the doorway.

"All right. Execute!"(Yuusuke)

Light effects surrounded the body and burst out from under the clothes the body was covered with. Before long, the light particles, dancing in the air, settled, and the dark red mangled hand that was missing some fingers has changed into smooth white hand of a female. The fingers that were gruesomely cut were also attached back to their former positions.

"What?! What the fuck did you do?!"(Vermeer)

Vermeer and Shaheed, their eyes opened wide from amazement, were at loss for words. Before they regained their composure, Fonke has uncovered the body again. A beautiful, perfectly symmetrical body was lying there with not a single wound visible on her beautiful skin. Isotta, covered her mouth, her face becoming all red from embarrassment.

"Haaaa… I guess reviving someone is impossible after all…"(Yuusuke)

He could only customize the corpse as any other item.

"That… that startled me… Besides, if you could revive people, I couldn't think of you as a human anymore, captain."(Vermeer)

"I agree…"(Shaheed)

"Haaa… She was quite a beauty. Those wind troupe bastards are thinking too highly of themselves"(Yuusuke)

Cooling their emotions, Vermeer and Shaheed also squat down near the body sighing in a similar manner to Yuusuke. Contrary to the two, instead of focusing on the mysterious arts they had just witnessed, Fonke, obviously more interested in the beauty of the

woman, covered the cloth again with regret clearly shown by his actions.

Afterwards, listening to Isotta's report, everyone moved towards the inner room to listen to what the two surviving prisoners had to say.

"U-Uhm… Captain"

"Hmm?"(Yuusuke)

"I, I think that… To be able to become beautiful again… that person… would also feel relieved…"

"… Is that so?"(Yuusuke)

["Yeah I guess she would be relieved"], thought Yuusuke, praying for the woman to be able to feel at least a little bit more happiness in the next world.

Isotta looked up at her ["Captain Yuusuke"], admiring him with her green eyes.

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[i] NOTE: the furigana implied "inside" while kanji read "concealed group"

[ii] CSI style

Chapter 15: Rain from the empty sky

In the storage room, two females – one with blond hair and another with blue hair – were sitting cuddled together and covered with a cloth used to cover the raw ingredients. They looked terrible, their eyes swollen from crying and signs of bruises still present on their faces. Aisha, having read Yuusuke's thoughts from his face, spoke in regret of her inability to be of more help.

"This is the most I can do with my powers."(Aisha)

Aisha, having done her best to close small cuts and scratches, hung her head dejectedly. While Yuusuke thought to help heal the girls completely, that was not his biggest problem at the moment.

"How do I say this… why are they covered with this cloth?"(Yuusuke)

"We didn't have any spare clothes…"(Aisha)

Aisha pointed towards a pile of rags at the corner of the warehouse as she explained that the clothes the girls were originally wearing were too tattered to be of any use. Their clothes, that were originally uniforms of a maid and a fortress staff, were shredded to pieces, stained by a large quantity of blood and other bodily fluids, and have been turned into a dirty pile of rags.

Yuusuke, pitying the two girls who were glancing at him with anxious looks in their eyes, decided that he should start by procuring some better clothing to wear instead of that cloth, used to cover the raw ingredients, which the girls were currently covered with. Thus, he approached the pile of rags and executed his customization art. Cleaning -> Mending -> Finishing.

"Ehm… C-Captain… What are you doing?"(Aisha)

"I don't think he could surprise us even more."(Fonke)

"Here," said Yuusuke as he gave brand new looking uniforms to Aisha, whose eyes were wide from astonishment, so she could give them to the girls. As some of the material was destroyed, the length of the skirts was a tad bit shorter, but it was still way better than being covered with a cloth used for raw ingredients. Fonke and the rest, having seen everything already, just shrugged their shoulders.

As the girls were changing clothes, the men had to stay outside. Sitting on the cold floor of the storehouse was a pathetic option, so Yuusuke created them some makeshift chairs.

"Captain, you can really do anything, eh?" (Fonke)

"It's, how to say it, convenient."(Shaheed)

"I heard the rumors that you are able to use every kind of divine art… It seems that they might actually be true ."(Vermeer)

After the girls finished changing, they once again began asking the girls about the events that had happened in the fortress. It started three days after the personnel

change and the delivery of materials, when the work for the day was already done and it was the time of the day when the workers had gathered in the dining room to eat their supper. A call for help suddenly resounded from outside of the fortress.

["A GUARD HAS FALLEN!!! WE NEED A HEALER. SOMEONE, PLEASE HELP!!!"](Wind Troupe crossdresser A)

The man seemed to have come down from the rooftop passage. Using the commotion outside as a sign to attack, countless wind blades flew into the dining room.

The busy dining room instantly turned into hell, filled with agonizing cries. Walls and ceiling were immediately splattered with fresh blood and on the floor, was food mixed with huge amount of blood and entrails of the deceased.

The off duty guards, who were on the second floor, became aware of all the ruckus that happened on the first floor. Some of the guards outside had their attention turned towards the same ruckus, but were quickly killed by wind blades once inside. As people tried to help the fallen guards, they too were slaughtered like a herd of animals.

Blue Garden elites, who have infiltrated the fortress by hiding between the arriving staff, took the fortress's maids and staff as hostages and even used them as living shields. They also pretended to be their allies as they approached the fortress guards and then quickly killed them.

As the chaos reached its climax, the only ones moving inside and outside of the fortress were the members of the wind troupe in disguise.

Amongst the survivors, the soldiers did not have the will to fight anymore and the staff were made to carry the bodies of their comrades and bury them in a hole outside of the fortress. Corpses inside of the fortress were carried to the sewage facility on the opposite side of the fortress. After all the corpses were piled at the sewage facility, the captives were also killed.

The guard inside the storage room was tortured, trying to get her to spit out the information about the secret rooms or passages where other survivors might still be hiding in. On the third day of this search, a notice about the Darkness God corps had arrived.

Wind Troupe also seized the information that this corps was comprised of only a single person. Moreover, that person was the wielder of a special type of divine arts. As they guessed that he was coming here to hasten the construction of the fortress though the use of his divine arts, they planned to fetch themselves a huge achievement for ambushing and destroying the newly formed elite unit of the palace.

The two girls, from the day of the attack until the day Yuusuke and his party arrived, were made to listen to the screams of the female guard that resounded throughout the cellar. The girls kept their sanity by persuading themselves that help will definitely arrive from the palace soon.

After listening to the summary of the events, everyone in Yuusuke's group sighed heavily. In the end, the only survivors in the fortress were these two women. This meant that around 80 guards, staff, and maids had been killed. To tear through the heavy silence, Vermeer proposed a plan for their subsequent actions.

“First we should confirm our fighting capabilities.” (Vermeer)

Guessing the enemy strength, they assumed that the events that happened in several places simultaneously within Fonklanc’s territory were caused by the Blue Garden spies. In that case, all of these events can be linked to the wind troupe which would amount their numbers to approximately 3 squads, who were acting separately.

Usually one squad consisted of four to eight soldiers. If this was the case, then the attack of the fortress would have been a collaborated attack between several squads.

Currently they have confirmed that there were at least four people outside. Then there were the three invaders that the darkness corps killed in the food storeroom. According to the testimony of the surviving girls, the attackers numbered around ten. If the groups acted in three to four man squads, then there was a possibility of another group hiding inside the fortress. While they were discussing this matter, at that time …..

Katsuntsun katsun katsu katsu katsu katkatkatsu….. [Sounds of lock being picked]

“?!”(Darkness corps)

“What now…?”(Someone from the darkness corps)

[Ding!](Sound of a metal ball dropping on the floor)

Yuusuke had returned the device that was attached to the lock of the trapdoor at the top of the staircase, leading down to the storage room, to its original state. The sound that resounded just now was the sound of the metal ball dropping down the staircase. This meant that someone else had opened the trapdoor.

“The-There are two of them… They are getting closer… probably there is one more at the top of the stairs… ?!They have also noticed us!”(Isotta)

Isotta immediately started searching for enemies and reported the situation in a whispering voice. The captive girls started clinging to Aisha’s arm in panic. As they did not hear any footsteps, the only way to confirm the approach of the other party was through the use of wind arts.

“What do we do now, captain?”(Vermeer)

As Yuusuke thought about their options after being asked for further instructions, he suddenly remembered what Reifold had told him back at the forest. He was also a wind user of great skills and was able to appear in different places according to his whim. Yet, the same Reifold was unable to detect Yuusuke’s pitfalls.

“Say, in a divine arts combat, can you invoke divine arts without performing specific actions?”(Yuusuke)

“Like raising your arms or performing a pushing motion? Well, once you get adept at using divine arts you can usually perform them by merely concentrating your mind.”(Vermeer)

Vermeer answered, that for the elites it would pose no problems aside from a small loss of concentration. Shaheed added, that he could cast a water ball like that if he was standing still. Therefore, capturing or restricting an elite divine arts user would have no

effect on lowering his battle potential.

"So, capture or restriction is out of the question…"(Yuusuke)

"Our opponents are the elites that are used to working behind enemy lines. It would be for the best to avoid thinking about being nice to them."(Vermeer)

"It is likely that, aside of the acting squad inside, there is another squad responsible for guarding the fortress."(Shaheed?)

"Running away from them is completely out of the question……Although they would expect us to run from them."(Fonke)

Yuusuke had pondered about shackles that diminishes ones divine arts strength. However, it did not seem likely that they would be able to obtain any information from the elite spy group, even if Yuusuke went through all the trouble of capturing them, they would probably kill themselves. If they fought against them and let even one of them escape, he or she would alert his or her comrades. Amongst his hesitations, Yuusuke finally decided to put the lives of his subordinates above anything and exterminate the opponents.

Having decided that, Yuusuke immediately closed and reinforced the storeroom doors followed by the constructing of traps in the cellar's passage.

He created pitfalls at the entrance to their room, as well as at the bottom of the entrance stairs. At the same time he created a device, resembling a suspended ceiling, right above those pitfalls. This device would remove the pillars supporting the ceiling. Originally, he took into consideration the preservation of the cellar, so Yuusuke only created exceptionally deep pitfalls, but he then added the falling ceiling as a sure kill measure to finish his opponents off.

Two wind users carefully advanced through the underground passage. After arriving at the closed door, they decided to siege their opponents and stopped to erase their presence. As a means of mentally overpowering their enemy, the two silently approached the closed door.

As they were in the second floor of the fortress when it got closed off, they got locked in with no means of getting out. After receiving instructions from the party outside of the fortress, they began searching for Yuusuke's group.

"Heeeey, it's useless to hide!"(Wind Troupe guy A)

"There are still a lot of us inside the fortress. Give up and undo your blockade."(Wind Troupe guy B)

Not getting any reply, the two exchanged glances as they began scanning the situation in the room. Suddenly the floor near the door disappeared and Yuusuke, having confirmed that the two fell into the trap, erased the supporting pillar. Death cries and a hideous sound of meat being crushed resounded in the basement.

"?! What's wrong?! What happened?! Answer me you two!"(Wind Troupe Girl)

Screamed the remaining member of the group, who was waiting upstairs. Thinking, ["It's a woman"] Yuusuke wavered for a second, but the stern looks of his comrades

have dispelled his doubts away and he customized the stairs, removing the steps.

Having suddenly lost her footing, the woman slid down the ramp into a pitfall that was readied for her at the bottom. Afterwards ceiling stones started to fall on her and, before long, her shrieks subsided as she was crushed by the stones.

"…It's all right. It seems… that was the last of them"(Isotta)

After hearing this Yuusuke restored the floor and the ceiling to their initial states and buried the three victims in the ground below the fortress. He did not clearly understand if he was bothered by his actions, but the fact that he just took the lives of three people made him feel something heavy in his chest.

After restoring the corridor he got Aisha and Shaheed to watch the entrance to the basement while Isotta and Fonke, with Vermeer as their leader, searched the second floor for enemies. It seemed that these were the last wind troupe members that have been inside of the fortress. The blockaded roof passage seemed to have traces of being hit by the wind blades as this group attempted to break out of the fortress.

[That reminds me. if the enemy would have thought of that, they could have used the wind blades to search for their opponents."](Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke was pondering for a new potential way to use his customization ability, they went to explore the sewage facility that the two prisoners have mentioned before. The party descended to the large hall that they have found themselves in as they initially rushed into the fortress and then they took the left side's passage. On this part of the fortress staff rooms and shower rooms lined up along the wall. After opening the door to the sewage room, everyone in the group spontaneously covered their faces with their clothes.

"What the fuck is this?"(Yuusuke)

"It's the smell of death. Isotta, you should better wait outside." (Vermeer)

As they only wanted to confirm the corpses, Yuusuke, along with Vermeer and Fonke descended down the stairs after leaving Isotta to guard the door. Yuusuke instantly created masks for the three of them to wear. Still, the source of this smell left them breathless.

The base of the stairs were blackened by the dried blood. As Vermeer was afraid that fire would cause the volatile gas, created by the corpses when they were decomposing, to explode, their only source of light was a dim glow that Vermeer produced without conjuring the actual flame. Therefore they could say that they were lucky that their field of vision was really small.

"Woo, how terrible… Isn't this place really big?"(Fonke)

They saw a huge pile of discolored bodies that have lost their shape due to the attacks of the highly skilled wind users. The bodies were in such a state that, if they had not worn clothes, one would not even think of them as human bodies. The corpses were piled atop of one another and were probably the corpses of the captives, who brought all the other dead bodies here in the story, told by the two survivors.

Having confirmed the victims, the trio left this place as fast as they could. They ran up

the stairs without even offering them a prayer for a better afterlife and closed the door immediately after leaving the passage. Fonke hastily used his wind arts to blow the putrid stench away.

“You were splendid down there, captain.”(Fonke)

“Was I?”(Yuusuke)

“For Starters, you did not vomit at that sight.”(Fonke)

Answered Fonke, while frowning and rubbing his stomach. “Aah”, replied Yuusuke. Witnessing that sight, it would not be strange that even a hardened person to vomit.

For Yuusuke it was at the very least a numbing sight. He certainly felt something in his stomach welling up as well. Even though it did not actually happen, in the back of his mind he felt that some of that sight had stuck to him. (as in stuck in his mind)

“What shall we do about the four guys outside?)”(Vermeer)

“We will exterminate the wind troupe”, declared Yuusuke. Fonke and Vermeer looked at each other after hearing this declaration, while Isotta blinked in surprise.

After returning to the underground cellar in the kitchen, Yuusuke moved all the provisions to the water well room and then reinforced the walls around the now empty room. He continued strengthening these walls until the room started to look like a nuclear shelter. It seemed that this storage room would continue to stand even if it would be hit directly.

After gathering everyone to this super safe room, Yuusuke opened his customization menu once more.

“Isotta.”(Yuusuke)

“Y-yes.”(Isotta)

“Can you get the horses that we used to pull our carriage to run away from here?”(Yuusuke)

“Y-yes?”(Isotta)

Yuusuke connected the underground room to the surface through a long, slender, chimney-like tube while Isotta issued a command to horses, who pulled the carriage that they rode here, to get away from here just in case they were still staying around the fortress. This was done so that would remain safe from whatever was about to happen aboveground.

“…I transmitted it, but… I don’t know if it has reached them or not…”(Isotta)

“It’s alright. But it would be sad if they got involved in this…”(Yuusuke)

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The leader of the wind troupe group, hiding outside the fortress, was discussing the wind arts transmission, which seemingly came from inside of the fortress with several

of his subordinates. The message seemed to be coded as it contained only a single word [RUN]. The horses, fastened to the wagon that the group has arrived in, had run off somewhere after hearing this message.

“Maybe … they sent the empty wagon back to the city as a message that they need reinforcements?”(Wind Troupe outside guy A)

“Empty wagon as a message that they need reinforcements? Hmm…”(Wind Troupe outside group leader)

“Even if they succeed in passing the message, by the time the reinforcements arrive they will probably be killed by the inside groups.”(Wind Troupe outside guy B)

As the leader of the outside group was thinking about whether to forfeit the mission and evacuate or create some plan to lure that group out of the fortress, he suddenly looked towards the fortress as he felt an activation aura of the divine arts.

“Le-leader, over there!” (Wind Troupe outside guy A)

“What is… what the fuck…”(Wind Troupe outside group leader)

The entire fortress was enveloped in light. They saw this phenomenon before, when the darkness god corps escaped their ambush by running into the fortress. After that light has subsided before the walls of the fortress had become impregnable. This light shot skywards from around the middle part of the fortress and, after reaching a certain height, spread out like a cloud.

As the light had filled the sky, it suddenly became dark again, with only shining particles fluttering in the air. Afterwards a sound of something breaking echoed behind him and whistling sounds of wind blades started resounding all around him as something tore the sky apart.

The cloud of light in the sky had become a lump of darkness that was falling on him. Other members of the wind troupe looked at it dumbfounded, murmuring: “It can’t be….” These words were the last thing they ever said.

The upper part of the fortress had become a cloud of square-shaped stones, which numbered around fifty two thousands. Ground was shaking from this deadly rain as eighty centimeter by forty centimeter wide stones fell everywhere around the entire premises of the fortress in approximately a one hundred meter radius.

After a while silence fell on the premises of the destroyed fortress and the single sound that tore through the silence was the sound on the horses that were returning after being called back again.

Chapter 16: Under the Sun and the Starry Sky

~Pov of I don't know who maybe violet? maybe krielov? maybe god? maybe Morgan freeman!

After receiving an emergency contact from Gear Hawk Fortress, an emergency party consisting of several god corps units was dispatched. By the time we arrived at the fort, the night was about to end. In the morning mist, the scene in which we saw was as if it was a ruin, the interior of Gear Hawk Fortress was being exposed, wreckage could be found all around, graves markers stood planted throughout the whole site. And in the vicinity was one of the god corps carriage's horse which was wandering around aimlessly.

Seeing that the friendly reinforcement have arrived, Yuusuke and his party who survived the onslaught began to walk out of the fortress unharmed. They began to describe the series of events that happened and handed the 2 survivors to the water arts professional unit. Before we started cleaning up the wreckage, they led us to underground basement of the fortress where the remains were located.

Debris of cobblestone was scattered all over the site. When Yuusuke used his customization ability, the debris was considered as part of a group item, thus allowing him to stack them up nicely in the corner of the site. Multiple craters were left behind in the premises, and an object that seemly belonged to the Wind Troupe was found within one of them.

The three people who were crushed inside the fortress were being dug up as well, with their bodies also restored by using the customization ability. As one would expect, the bodies weren’t in a very well off state, but they could be sufficiently restored to their former condition. And they will be sent back to Blue Garden on a later date.

10 dead bodies of the Wind Troupe were discovered by Yuusuke's party, but as they continued to search the vicinity behind the fort another 5 bodies was found, tallying up to a total of 15 bodies.

Similar to how Floncanc's palace god corps function, the Blue Garden elite troops normally do missions in a platoon of 20 people. But in reality, the whole wind troupe have been wiped out.

The bodies that had been stacked up in the basement were too difficult for them to move, thus they were being subjected to cremation. A part of the Gear Hawk Fortress was made into a memorial to mourn these victims.

Thus, the fortress was being extended a little bit. A state funeral for the victims will be carried out onsite, transportation carriages are being dispatch from the palace to the bereaved families and relatives to mourn for their love one.

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4 days after the incident ~~

<< The Armed Group from Blue Garden which attacked Gear Hawk Fortress was wiped out by the Darkness God Corps with an Iron Fist >>

It seems that this topic became the headlines of Sanc Adiet, as a promulgation that was distributed by the palace. << The chief constructor of the observation tower wiped out the entire Blue Garden elite force just by himself! >> This hot topic became a daily exaggerated rumor.

Due to the incident that happened this time, King Esvobus made Yuusuke assume the title of Hero, as he had shown great achievements and feats of valor. He had succeeded in diluting the impression of Floncanc being weak that was being made after the massacre of the fortress. Calling him a hero was to suppress the information of the damage being done, as it was a devised plan using a merit of battle to divert the people's resentment from escalating into a full scale war.

An official announcement from Blue Garden was given, "Our country has not given any form of command to raid a fortress, it was the arbitrary actions of the Wind Troupe," using this as an excuse, the government of Blue Garden denied all involvement with respect to the fort attack. Thus recognizing that an elite group of Blue Garden had gone wild.

"Damn Annoying!"

Within the room of the Central HQ facility under the city of Paula, amongst the Blue Garden leaders, "The Supreme leader, Izapnar" was cursing and swearing.

Due to this incident, the countries that were related to it had begun making the necessary arrangements, from its own citizens, its militia units, to the documents and notifications in which their elite group have completed. It seems that the other countries are slandering, "Your country couldn't even manage and satisfy your own troops," the government of Blue Garden have no choice to use this to cover up for it's appearance sake.

The question of the effectiveness of the activity and wiping out of the wind troupe was being raised within the parliament. As Blue Garden has only a few fire art users, their strongest hand was the elites of the wind arts.

It was due to their presence, which allowed provocations, that they had all the anti-Fonclanc know-hows, thus it was a painful lost. Although the wind troupe is still operating, but 1/5 of the attack force had been lost in Gear Hawk Fortress.

Just in a few mere decades, this new and rising country, Blue Garden, have been rapidly developing. Although it is their national policy to have equality among everyone, their neighboring countries do not share the same ideals.

Without sufficient war potentials, to start a war with Fonclanc might cause the countries of Nosusentesu and Gazetta to attack from behind, thus they cannot afford to pull out the wind troupes who were currently being deployed there. From now on, it will be too dangerous to start a war with Fonclanc.

The Supreme leader Izapnar had no choice but to take up King Esvobus’s policies.

While the leaders of Blue Garden were rotting in the oval office, Zeshald was guiding the trainees in the Divine arts leadership training facility of Paula. And he was thinking about the recent rumor that was spread around the country,"Hero of Gear Hawk".

It's been 2 month since Yuusuke had been summoned into this world, and 16 days since Zeshald crossed over to Blue Garden and he became employed as a palace knight. And on his first mission he had wipe out the wind troupe which attacked the fortress, thus achieving a large accomplishment that awarded him the honored title of Hero.

”To promote Yuusuke as a hero, it seems that he was within Esvobus expectations...."

This is all happening too rapidly, a chill was sent down Zeshald's spine as he remembered a vision about the "evil god" getting a foothold as it became the center of power. Although, it was him who encouraged Yuusuke with his insights and to learn more about this world.

In the documents and literatures, it described the awakening of the "evil god", it is said that it is possible to control the urge of destroying this world. But everything is just a speculation an unimaginable speculation.

"But if, things were to return as it was, it might have a negative impact."

-- Understanding how well the things of this world works. It would be better if I just destroy it-- a emotionless black eyes Yuusuke flashed before his eyes.

Zeshald sighed as he tried to shake off this scary imagination. Thanks to his current environment, his thinking had become increasingly negative lately. He started to laugh at himself. How will Yuusuke change this world in the future, I must keep a close watch on him.

"Erm, Instructor, Sir.... am I useless?"(Water girl apprentice)

"Huh? Oh no no, I was just lost in my thoughts."(Zeshald)

His young water arts student was showing an anxious expression as he let out a sigh. Zeshald followed up with,"It's nothing, I am sorry" and stated that there was no problem with her water arts. Relieved by hearing what he said about her water arts skill, she smiled. She was a cadet aspiring to join the "Water Troupe".

"Nevertheless, as long as you push your powers to the limits, you will have no problem becoming a member of the water arts corps within the milita"(Zeshald)

"Thank you. But, no matter what I absolutely would like to be attached to the Water Troupe.... to become of use to my sister."

Although her sister is currently a member of the elite team, they were both civilian employees of the militia under Blue Garden. Even though they differ in position and affiliation, there were hardly any conflict between them. Her sister is a member of an elite troupe and is currently on a mission where she could not return home very so often.

"After this mission, she will be able to take a vacation."

"Well, other than the elite group "Earth Troupe", everyone else is busy."(Zeshald)

She will be able to meet her sister within the same base even if they belong to different units, thus she was waiting patiently for her sister to return home for her vacation.

"Well, if that's the case do your best as for your sister under my supervision. By the way, which unit does your sister belongs to?"(Zeshald)

"Wind Troupe"

After hearing what Instructor officer Zeshald said, her face immediately became pale.

Sanc Adiet~~

It was a fine afternoon, on the upper floors of Volance palace. Violet was smacking her lips after eating her favorite choice of seasoned customized rara fruits. She then recommend some fruit alcohol to Yuusuke who was sitting on opposite side.

"Nope, I'm fine."(Yuusuke)

"What's this? Do you know that you're gonna make the title of hero weep by not drinking?"(Violet)

Violet was very happy to treat Yuusuke like a hero, but he himself is currently in a complex state of mind. After feeling the harsh reality which had happened in the fortress Yuusuke could feel the difference in temperament from Violet who hasn't been much in touch to reality.

"Heroes ..... the only few who survived, barely escaping while countless others had died."(Yuusuke)

"ooh, this is the first time you showed that kind of modestly of an important person." (Violet)

In contrast of Violet getting merrier by the minute, Yuusuke's feeling had steadily faded away. Yuusuke felt vexed as it was difficult to look at Violet who is currently in a joyful state. 'I guess that's how the position of what a princess is like to it's people.'

'Well, there isn't a need for me to know.'(Yuusuke thoughts)

As an entourage, Kreilov have always been telling Violet as a "Royal Princess" she should not to mingle with the so called lower class and there wasn't a need for her to know the extremities between the citizens and soldiers.

Knowing well about the people under her who are the working, an ideal ruler would understand how the mechanics of this world works. But that doesn't mean that she will ascend to the throne and become the future king, currently she is to stay as a " healthy princess with royal lineage" to welcome the next king as much as possible.

That same Violet who is currently planned for the future is right here. If everyone’s roles have been decided from the start, Violet's role would be the "Royal Princess". Thus I myself should just fulfill my role.

Coming up to this conclusion, Yuusuke, who knows his role, begins to pour his power into the rara fruit which he was currently holding in his hand.

"What kind of taste would you make next, will it be as spicy?"(Violet)

"Yuusuke.....?"(Violet)

Violet who was sensitive to her surrounding felt a change in atmosphere around Yuusuke and gaze at him quizzically. Her red eyes were motionlessly staring into his black eyes. "What's up?" Yuusuke tilted his head and smiled.

"Noooo! Stop that!"(Violet)

All of the sudden, Violet jumped up and started screaming, Yuusuke who was holding the rara fruit threw it upwards reflexively

"Wha-What's is it....?"(Yuusuke)

"Stop it with those eyes! I was just looking at your eyes! Until you did....."(Violet)

Violet's face turned red and she got exasperated while tears started to form around her eyes. Yuusuke was standing in daze as he saw the twin tail girl turned around and run away while her red dress retreated into the distance.

Yuusuke looked back to the sound of small birds and the lifting of the chair, standing in the corner of the room was Kreilov who had a difficult expression while clenching his fist on his chest and staring him. After awhile Krielov calmed down as he exhaled his breath.

"At first, I wanted to punch you right in the face, but because I think I do not have the qualifications to do so, I stopped."(Krielov)

"....."(Yuusuke)

"I have no idea what the fuck you saw in the fortress, most likely it is unimaginable. But ..... to mock those who don't know is just pure arrogance."(Krielov)

"That wasn't my intention....."(Yuusuke)

Not being able to complete his sentence, Yuusuke begin asking himself. By experiencing various kind of cognizance, and it is still an ongoing process, he certainly became a little irritated by Violet who seems to be going on at her usual pace.

"You're very honest....."(Krielov)

Krielov begin speaking about "the story that will only be heard here", Violet has always wanted to hear different kind of stories of people from many different sources. Taken aback by the thoughtless remark, "a princess who knows nothing", she wanted to revolt about it, but doesn't know how to.

"In my position, the princess doesn't need to know what happened on site. But --" (Krielov)

In terms of his personal feelings of a dedicating guard and educator, he caught glimpses of her intelligence on the insights of the government policy from the sheltered princess, and if it was possible he would like to show her the vast world. As Krielov confessed.

As Yuusuke admonished his own feelings. The voice of Zeshald resounded in his mind

to broaden his insights. The previous idea of each and everyone have their own roles to fulfill, he didn't abandon this thought, but perhaps there are certain roles for people that only they could do.

But that is his own individual answer that he had grasped and derived on, respectively there will be a time when he will have to chose his own road.

'To receive something handed down by someone, doesn't mean that it is all determined from the beginning.'

Right now, Yuusuke wasn't strong enough, 'To defy the destiny that was given' to him.

Yuusuke who was searching for Violet went to the carriage porch, where he came across a familiar face.

"Hi, whatsupp captain? Why are you here?"(Fonke)

"Fonke, have you seen Violet?"(Yuusuke)

"The princess? She seem to have sneaked out awhile ago."(Fonke)

"The city it is....."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke requested Fonke to take him along to the city as he was heading out on the carriage. As he roughly knows the place to find her.

Using "Gear Hawk Hero"'s underling and a member of the party which accompanied him to the fortress which is a hot topic amongst the people, Fonke used this as a reason to become popular in the tavern that he frequently visits in the city.

On the other hand, Vermeer, Shaheed and Aisha couldn't walk around calmly, thus they did not head down to the commoner's district very often.

"Are you heading out to pick up the princess?"(Fonke)

"Yea, something like that."(Yuusuke)

Violet appeared to have boarded the carriage alone, and the surrounding soldiers/knights became her temporary guards immediately as she sneaked out of the palace. While the rest that were left behind were discussing whether there might be a commotion at the commoner district again.

She finally arrived at her destination after passing 2 district gates. The observation tower in the gate of the commoner district. As the evening time approaches, the various stalls that lined up on the main streets begin keeping and tidying up their shops.

Since they approved the special stalls around the vicinity of the observation towers, the lucky merchants of these stalls seem to hold out until the very last minutes before the sunsets.

"Well than Capt, I will be going to patrol near the tavern."(Fonke)

"Drink in moderation."(Yuusuke)

After dropping Yuusuke off, Fonke who was off-duty went to "patrol" in the tavern. If it was Aisha, he would have been scolded immediately for his attitude for being too frank to the captain of the royal knights, Yuusuke. But in this case, Yuusuke would also be scolded for his ,"awareness as a captain".

"Let's see now..."(Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke sent off Fonke, he looked up towards the observation tower. A red dress that stands out was there. After confirming the fluttering scarf, Yuusuke headed towards the observation tower.

"Hey, isnt that..... Gear Hawk Fortress hero?"*(bystander 1)

"He’s wearing the royal knights uniform, is it the real person?"(bystander 2)

"No way, Why would he be in this kind of place?"(bystander 1)

"Maybe he is here to check on the condition of the tower which he built....?"(bystander 2)

The people who were lining up around the observation tower waiting for their turn to ascend saw the appearance of Yuusuke and began spreading rumors. Not long ago the princess who sneaked out began climbing the tower, people were whispering about why she didn't have a attendant with her. After noticing Yuusuke, the gatekeeper immediately came over and greeted him.

"Thank you for your good work, the princess went to climb the tower earlier, but...." (Gatekeeper)

"Oh, I am here to pick her up."(Yuusuke)

When Violet ascended the tower, the people were allowed in, thus a collection of people waiting began to stack up below it, and after hearing that he was here to pick her up, the gatekeeper celebrated by breaking up into an expression of relief. As I thought, it had caused a little bit of a problem.

Yuusuke stood in front of the entrance to the observation tower and began to ponder as he looked up slightly. As it was the first time he would be climbing up the tower, due to the fact that previously he had just instantly built the tower, remembering the time when he was descending it, he felt breathless.

Currently, Yuusuke is equipped with his specially buffed pants, jacket and cloak, these items were the darkness god corps’ clothing that were given to him. He enhanced them with physical resistance, divine art resistance, combustion resistance, freezing resistance and abnormal condition resistance. He also thought of giving some other items an increase in physical strength and movement assist bonus, making sure that he did not overlook any item that will seem convenient.

"Those rings, do you have 4 of them?"(Yuusuke)

"Eh? Y-Yes it's a total of 16 green crystals!"(Merchant)

"Hey, I am in a hurry keep the change"(Yuusuke)

"Th-Thank you so much"(Merchant)

He bought the 4 rings at a cheap price of 3 blue crystals, thus he begin enhancing them with stamina recovery and movement speed assist. As the value of the item was cheap the enhancement values isn't very high, there wasn't a problem as it will be only use for climbing up and down the stairs. Yuusuke equipped 2 of the rings onto his fingers and obtained the enhancement effect, thus beginning his one shot climb to the top from the entrance of the observation tower. By the way, the other 2 rings were for Violet to equip when they descend the tower.

Normally when one walks up to the 50 flight of stairs they would be breathless and their knee would have given up, although he was getting breathless he was still taking it easy. By dropping his pace a little he could recover some stamina, using this cycle technique it allows him to continue to climbing.

And throughout the climb, he did not even take a single break and arrived at the top floor. The sky was dyed halved in sunset colors, while the stars began to rise on the horizon in the opposite direction.

"You really, really like high places"(Yuusuke)

"....."(Violet)

After catching his breath Yuusuke looked towards the young girl who was resting her chin on the edge of the observation tower and calling out to her. Her red dress was waving while her scarf and her twin tail hair was fluttering in the wind. As Violet was standing there without turning her head back, Yuusuke when over to call her while slightly nudging her shoulders.

"Look over here."(Yuusuke)

"Don't touch me so friendly, you rude person."(Violet)

The hands that were placed on her shoulders were being twisted and swept away by Violet, on the contrary her harsh words doesn't seem to have any effect at all. Yuusuke grabbed both of her shoulders and turned her around to face him, Violet's face was still hanging down looking at the ground.

"Raise your head."(Yuusuke)

"Don't want to."(Violet)

"Come on look up."(Yuusuke)

Now he placed both his hands across her cheeks to raise her head. With tears in her red eyes, she protested by glaring at the "Rude person", and immediately diverted her angry eyes away.

"Look at my eyes"(Yuusuke)

"....." (Violet)

Timidly Violet glance into Yuusuke's eyes, as the 'distance' that she previously saw was no longer there she begin to feel relieved.

"I am so sorry for what happened just now"(Yuusuke)

"ye....."(Violet)

Violet had a blank look as Yuusuke apologized. Yuusuke explained that it was his misjudgment, while he was deep in his own thought at palace. As he wasn't straight in his mind, he just gave Violet a simple answer.

"If you really tend on become a great princess, a noble person, I think that Violet should know more about the common people."(Yuusuke)

"Really, do Yuusuke really think so?"(Violet)

Violet's eyes begin to shine as she got affirmation from Yuusuke. Everyone around her said and believe in "those who are nobles, doesn't need to know about the low born", while Zeshald and Yuusuke answered differently to her in smiling face, "go and experience the different things of this world."

"In the past, my dad use to tell me those words"(Violet)

"I see.....well, great people will always have their circumstances."(Yuusuke)

Even if one is to know such circumstances, it always lead to the understanding of others, and to polish one's self as Yuusuke preaches.

"Even I myself, don't understand those who think that they are self-important, the things that happened around the world and even myself."(Yuusuke)

"As such, I am the same as you."(Violet)

'Well if it is like this, why don't we go explore the world and deepen our knowledge', as they nodded at each other. Since Violet isn't able to move freely around away from the palace, Yuusuke will go explore the world to see and hear a variety of things from different places in her stead, only to return to tell her stories about his adventures.

Violet gave this special mission to the darkness god corp as it was under her direct command, thus Yuusuke became the only knight whose activities would be done outside of the palace.

"By the way, Yuusuke"(Violet)

"Ng?"(Yuusuke)

"Do you yourself know what you are doing right now?"(Violet)

".....er?"(Yuusuke)

As said as Yuusuke return to reality, he begin to realize that he was currently holding Violet in her cheeks with both his hands while tears were slowly flowing down, they were both standing under the starry sky atop of the observatory deck. The presences of the soldiers that were hiding behind the doorway while sneaking a peek could be felt.

"As I thought isn't it a lover's date?"

"There must be too much disturbance in the palace"

"But there wasn't any announcement for another fiance candidate right?"

"At any rate he is the hero"

Yuusuke released his hand immediately away from Violet, in order to stop any unexpected rumors he told the soldiers there that he was performing a ritual for a first of it's kind special mission.

Chapter 17: The daily life and rest day of a soldier

Dawn~~

In the upper floors of the Volance Palace, inside the royal knights dormitory, Yuusuke was toying with some small items in his room. By taking advantage of the special effects enhanced by the customization ability, he applied a recovery effect and a tranquility effect to his pajamas, and as a result it allowed him to awake earlier in the morning and shorten his sleeping time.

And so for the past few days, Yuusuke have been performing a daily routine of manufacturing customized accessories during the wee hours of the morning.

"Hmm, like I suspected the clearer the gems the better the enhancements"(Yuusuke)

Using his pay, he purchased precious gems to create rings and bracelets with special effects through his customization ability, this is to prepare himself with items to suit the various situations that he would encounter. The numerical value compensation of the special effects were several times more than the cheap rings which he bought in the stall near the vicinity of the observation tower 8 days ago.

In order to hide the fact from the upper echelons, Violet and his underlings were to say that "it takes time to make even one" of these special effect equipment.

Thanks to his enhancement ability, Yuusuke generally have a daily peaceful and quiet life in the palace.

Due to the successful mission, when he returned from the fortress, whereby Yuusuke and his group unexpectedly wiped out an entire Blue Garden elite team, the so called "Princess Pet" have caused an upset and shock within each of the different factions of palace elites.

In particular, the rise of Yuusuke cause Princess Violet's fiance candidates to get wary of him, whose unexpectedly lucky. Also, being accompanied by his men who isn't talented made him more suspicious, thus they can't figure out where his loyalty lies.

As it was the policy of King Esvobus to avoid a full scale war, there wasn't really any opportunity to make a quick credit and get a feat of valor.

As a retaliation on Blue Garden's repeated provocation, there were people from the funeral of the victims who raised their voices to fan the flames of wars, but due to the lack of information of the divine arts user Yuusuke whom have said to have annihilated the enemy using aoe, the number of people who agreed to it were few.

Meanwhile, unhappy with Yuusuke being bestowed with the feat of valor, the fiance candidates set out to take testimonies from Yuusuke's underlings regarding the incident of the daggers which was "bestowed by Captain Yuusuke" due to it's incredible performance.

Just by holding it you could feel yourself being powered up, your body becomes lighter and it also amplifies your divine arts, although the appearance seems like an ordinary dagger. One of the fire soldiers equipped this dagger for a divine arts trial and he was able produced a 1.5 times larger size fireball than his usual.

So they approached them with all means to get those daggers, but Vermeer and his party refused them politely by saying," this item is personally bestowed to us by our captain". And so as to avert jealously and trouble in the future they shrewdly said, "if you absolutely want one you could go and negotiate with our captain.".

After knowing about the situation, he consulted with Violet and Kreilov to work out a plan. By re-adjusting the stats on the 4 rings which he previously use for the ascending and descending the observation tower, he gave them to each of the 4 captains of the royal knights.

"The Ring of Fire Arts", "The Ring of Water Arts", The Ring of Earth Arts", "The Ring of Wind Arts" these were the enchantments the rings were adjusted to to fit the different divine arts. Changing the design to fit the different type of divine arts element, these rings possess a higher amplification ratings compared to Vermeer and his party daggers.

Krielov equipped the ring that was given to him and tested out his own fire arts. Normally when he imbued fire to his spear there would be a wavering flame that seemed to twine and blaze around the spear, but with the ring the flame seem to be from the spear itself like it was focusing on the spear, thus appearing like a flaming spear instead of a spear wearing flames.

The flaming spear performance became the center of attention in eyes of the soldiers, while the soldiers were still in awe, Krielov begin to discuss about it with Yuusuke.

"I would be very delighted, if you could make these equipment for my subordinates as well."(Krielov)

"I could, but I can only make them in my spare time in between missions, as it takes quite alot of time....."(Yuusuke)

This came to a mutual understanding between the soldiers as, "if you would like to have equipment made by Yuusuke, you must not interfere with him". As a result from the palace to the city, almost no one would dare to come and offend Yuusuke's mood.

In this case "almost", although there were some exceptions. In the first place, there weren't much ways to upset Yuusuke's mood.

"Hey, Yuusuke. Can I have one of those rings?"(Hivodir)

"Not yet. Shouldn't the vice captains be next on the list? Usually."(Yuusuke)

While on his way towards the dinning halls, he coincidentally encountered Hivodir in the hallway and walked along side with him, thus he appealed to Hivodir that manufacturing process is time consuming, "the wait is roughly around 50 days".

"If one must say, certainly with the god corps, I may be just one of the elites, but within the palace, my nobility rank far surpasses the captains."(Hivodir)

"I don't know, and I am not aware."(Yuusuke)

Having friendship with her highness Violet, not to mention having the ability to be touted as a hero, this darkness god captain is already in the same standings as the other 4 god captains. While the majority of the royal knights have their hesitation to

approach Yuusuke, but the one whose the worst person to encounter with, Hivodir was the only person with the assertiveness to approach him.

In his own way, the signs of the burden of being the lineage of a high ranking noble family, having a complex of not being strong enough, while feeling that his pure divine arts power isn't enough, thus wanting to compensate them through other means and changing the state from when he came here.

For such a person like him, he was the only one who approached Yuusuke, without realizing he used his family name and inheritance as a tactic, although it was just a waste of time.

"Well, I expected the best equipment appropriate for me."(Hivodir)

"Ehh, you're not eating?"(Yuusuke)

While Yuusuke and Hivodir walked into the dinning hall, Hivodir suddenly swung his hand and placed it on Yuusuke's back, Yuusuke turn his head back and looked at him, Hivodir said with a killer smile, "In the morning, I had taken breakfast at my parent's house."

The waiter came in front of them was pushing the food wagon as he tried to intrude on them, Yuusuke felt he was interesting as he left an impression on him while he walks into the dinning hall.

"Yo-YOU! Watch where you are going, you weird guy"(Hivodir)

"Awawawa, I am so sorry! Are you okay?"(Waiter)

"Hmm, that's a surprisingly interesting guy."(Yuusuke)

Afternoon. As usual Yuusuke went to show his face to his underlings in the resting/waiting room for the god corp soldiers. A few days back when Violet brought Yuusuke and visited this place, the overall atmosphere is said to be like a tavern, now it had been transformed into a furnished room not inferior to the resting/waiting rooms of the royal knights.

Although there isn't any wasteful luxurious decorations, there were special sofa and tables that could not be found in the upper floors.

"Oh, the captain is here."(Fonke)

"Thanks for the good work, Captain Yuusuke."(Aisha)

"Yoz. Today, only Fonke and Aisha is here, where are the others?"(Yuusuke)

"Isotta is off-duty today, old man Vermeer is out patrolling."(Fonke)

Shaheed is currently at the training grounds doing his personal training. Although within the resting/waiting room it wasn't just Yuusuke's underlings only, there were other different groups of god corp soldiers inside too, but most of them weren't hesitated to exchange dialogue with Yuusuke unlike the Royal knights.

"Mr Captain, could you produce the fruit drink flavor again, please."

"I am sorry to disturb, the lamp have broke.....will you be able to fix it?"

"Mr Captain, the underwear which you made it for me before, could you make it one size larger for the chest(boobs)?

As usual the general soldiers who have a variety of requests came over to him. Using the excuse of meeting up with his underlings, Yuusuke have been frequently going to the resting/waiting room, he had repaired and customized the furniture in the room, adjusting the various taste of the fruit wine which they brought to him, thus deepening their fellowship between them.

As it was Yuusuke's mission to observe the common people, listening to their voices, and report the findings of what he heard to Violet. He is also able to hear the different kind of gossips and stories from the general soldiers who goes onto patrol mission within the city. From interesting stories to depressing stories that causes one to frown, a variety of stories that he have heard.

A horror story about a royal ghost whose body was buried under the city due to imprisonment, a story about a man who wet his pants when he reached the top of the observation tower! There are also stories like these which can't be laughed at.

"Captain are you heading to the city today? Hey tag me along"(Fonke)

"Err, since I have always been heading towards the direction of the observation tower, today I want to explore a different location."(Yuusuke)

While responding to the soldiers requests, Yuusuke handed over the customized fruit liquor and jerky to Fonke, whereby the drinking group made a weird sound of "UHyo", while hastily leaving the resting/waiting room.

Looking at the way they escape, it was amazing how Aisha's faced migrated from a shocked look to an angry face in mere seconds. As it have already been the 4th time she scolded them.

"Captain!"(Aisha)

"Hiyo~"(Yuusuke)

Hearing that Yuusuke dashed away with all his might down the corridor.

While leaving the palace without a carriage, Yuusuke make use of his movement enhancement ring and started running towards the commoner district. The items that were enhanced with special effects of defense were the darkness corp uniform set which included gloves, belt, boots, the other parts including rings, bracelets and etc.

Equipped with a mantle, running past the streets of the noble and middle class district like a shadow as if a sudden gust made by a divine art user. The figure of the "Hero of Gear Hawk Fortress" running, became recognized as a famous sight in the city.

"Hmm let's see, today I shall head over to the direction of the morph ranches." (Yuusuke)

For convenience, Yuusuke used the direction of which the sun rises to the east, and started walking towards the northwest side of the city. It was the exact opposite direction of where the observation tower stood. By the way, Gear Hawk Fortress is located at the west. The village of Rufk is a little south of the direction east.

On the west side of the city were once hectares of ranches, but due to the recent activities from Blue Garden, there were many appearances of wild beasts and monsters wreaking havoc, thus the planned relocation towards the north or east side of the city.

Yuusuke was currently walking down this road of the commoner district when suddenly he saw a familiar face and stopped afoot.

"Isotta!"(Yuusuke)

Rather than her normal soldier appearance, Isotta was wearing a casual city clothes, while trying to trot past hugging a bag on her chest covering half her face. Thus, Yuusuke’s eyes began to follow her movement as she gave out an impression that doesn't really feel like a soldier, but an ordinary girl.

Isotta was hugging a bag, and without noticing Yuusuke, she walked out of the crowd into an alleyway which leads out of the city. For some reason or another, Yuusuke felt it was weird and headed towards the alley way leisurely. As Isotta stride was small even while trotting, Yuusuke was able to walk normally to catch up with her.

After exiting the dim alley, it was a corner where the artless live, a slum which have been spread out like an artless street. What does a child like Isotta doing around the artless street? And, Yuusuke being worried about Isotta, began to set foot into the artless street.

As the residents saw the appearance of Yuusuke, whose a royal knight, they all panic and shut themselves inside their houses, there were those who ran into the side alleys to hide, as they hastened themselves to not standout. From the reaction of this area, it seems that apparently the divine users doesn't have a good impression to those living in the outer area of the city.

"It seems like, this is their reaction if the opponent is a soldier, due to the ‘criminals’ being the divine art users and the victims are the artless, it is conceivable that they are too scared to move/do anything."

There was almost no topics regarding the artless that was being told by the soldiers. Thinking about using his hearing to pinpoint her location, Yuusuke drops his thoughts as he saw Isotta heading inside a house.

Along the way to this place, you could see the artless exchanging greetings with Isotta normally. Unlike the usual soldier figure, she seems like a ordinary girl, and currently she is having a friendly exchange with some acquaintance.

Isotta was currently exchanging her greetings with an old lady normally, but the time when she walk passed Yuusuke with averted eyes, and her timid atmosphere when she walked into the road around the vicinity.

"Hmm"(Yuusuke)

The little stand alone house which Isotta entered was made up of square stones and

wood. As Yuusuke walked up to the front of the house, he could hear a weird speech coming from inside.

"Are you heading out again? You could do the things slowly though"(Man’s voice)

"Yes.....but, I don't want to be left behind in the god corps training.....I don't want to be a burden to the my fellow comrades."(Isotta)

The usual stuttering Isotta dived under the cloth door of the house as she saw the appearance of Captain Yuusuke, she did a sudden jump.

"Hiii! Cap-Captain!"(Isotta)

"Yoz"(Yuusuke)

"Eerrrmm Why-why are you here?"(Isotta)

"Well, I was wandering around the city, and thinking where should I go...."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke wanted to say that he came here with a purpose but if felt difficult to say,"I came with a purpose", though the words seems a little uncomfortable if you put it that way. Isotta who misinterpret the meaning of his sentence begin to force an explanation out.

"Th-th-this isn't what it seems! I didn't mean to hide it! To-to be released from duty.....I-I will be in trouble"(Isotta)

"Hey, calm down, calm down. I have no idea what is going on here"(Yuusuke)

"......what's going on, Isotta"(Man’s voice)

The voice seems different from the man's voice which he heard just now, his head and body is being wrapped with bandages as this largely build white haired young man came out of the cloth door. Standing behind the young man were 2 elderly, a man and a woman who is anxiously looking towards them. Those 2 elders were also the artless as both their hair were white.

The young man who had bandages winded across his body immediately had a convinced expression the moment he looked at Yuusuke.~~

"So you are the Hero of Gear Hawk?"(man's voice)

He was standing there with a fearless smile while saying so.

Chapter 18: An [Artless] Traveler

Both of Isotta's parents were [Artless]. If a divine arts user got pregnant with an [artless] child, she usually opted for an abortion, or, if a child was born, he was given over to [artless] parents to foster him. Likewise, if an [artless] conceived a child blessed by one of the gods, there were a lot of cases of the child being given over to the ability users to foster him.

In Isotta's case, her parents were unable to find any ability user to foster her. As her parents were living in the outskirts of the city, they believed that she would be accepted in the ability user society as she became an adult and they have raised her in the [artless] satellite town.

As Isotta was the only one with green hair and eyes amongst the blonde children it was not easy for her to merge in, so she grew up to be slightly introverted.

In the social system, until the child became an adult, he was treated according to the social status of his parents. In the event that a blessed child was being taken care of by [artless] parents, upon becoming an adult, only the child received the benefits according to the blessing he/she had received from the gods. As soon as she reached an age that allowed her to enlist into the divine god corps Isotta joined the corps to be able to support her aging parents.

She was selected as a member of the darkness god corps, and with that her pay rose as well. She intended to use the money for her parents, both of whom became unable to work on the fields after suffering injuries in an accident. Nevertheless, the palace guard god corps / royal knights was an organization for elites of this social system.

Although she was one of the members, it might only be temporary as she had obtained that position by pure luck because she was the only communication type wind arts user present at the time the members were being selected.

Isotta was feeling uneasy, she was afraid that she would be forced to resign from the darkness god corps if the fact that she lived with the [artless] became known. While they were talking in front of her house, Isotta's mind was dizzy as she was thinking about her parents and about what would happen after she invited Yuusuke inside. Finally, she made up her mind to be open about it.

"So it's like that."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke finished talking. ["As I thought, this person is slightly different."], Isotta could barely stand from the tension and uneasiness, but after looking at Yuusuke, she felt that he was somehow different from the other people in the palace.

"Heee, so you are a traveler…"(Yuusuke)

Isotta's parents invited him in and Yuusuke accepted the offer. After apologizing for intruding into their house he started listening to the story of a wounded man.

He was carried into the house after sustaining grave injuries not long before Yuusuke got an official call to serve the palace. He got himself injured when he was trying to protect Isotta's parent's mooph farm from the demon beast attack. He called himself Shinha, an [artless] traveler who was wandering around different countries.

Isotta's parents did not have enough money to call a healing type water arts user to heal this man. Moreover, no water arts user would be interested in traveling all the way to the [artless] district to heal some suspicious traveler. Isotta's parents offered Shinha to stay in their house while he recovered from his injuries and the traveler accepted their invitation.

In this world travelers were not a rare sight. However, an [artless] traveling alone was something that could be called a little strange. To add to that, he was wielding a sword. At least in Fonclanc, with the exception of hunting, the [artless] almost never held any arms, so to the locals this guy would only raise suspicions.

"Is that sword real?"(Yuusuke)

"…Ah, but of course. So you are skeptical about me after all?"(Shinha)

Shinha assumed that Yuusuke was cautious about him being armed. After all, divine arts users considered [artless] to be a powerless existence [which remains powerless no matter what they do]. Such notion was especially strong in Fonclanc where a caste system was present.

Thus, a matter such as an armed [artless] traveling in the capital may not be overlooked by a palace guard/royal knight of Fonclanc, not to mention an elite one that is being applauded as a hero… but —

"It's not that. I just haven't seen a sword like this before."(Yuusuke)

Shinha doubted Yuusuke who was fascinated by the strange sword. One way or another, Yuusuke did not show any signs of investigating him, neither could he sense a different kind of aura that he remembered from before when a person had a few of his lackeys hidden nearby.

At this time, Isotta's mother brought some tea saying, "Thanks for always taking care of my daughter. Please enjoy this tea as a token of appreciation."

"Ah, thank you."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke took the teacup and sipped the tea. Seeing this, Shinha's doubts turned to interest as he watched Yuusuke enjoying the tea. The guy before him bowed his head to an old [artless] woman, moreover he drank the cheap looking tea, offered by an [artless], without any hesitation. Shinha could not find any trace of discrimination in Yuusuke's actions. There were nearly no divine art users that didn't show some kind of supremacy towards the [artless].

"… Can I take a look at it?"(Yuusuke)

Shinha held out the great sword, he had stationed against the wall, to Yuusuke. Seeing a real sword for the first time, Yuusuke gladly accepted the sword. It was a two meter length two handed sword and its weight followed its appearance.

"Hmm? Is it broken?"(Yuusuke)

"Hmm, you understood that by just holding it?"(Shinha)

Yuusuke opened the customization menu immediately after touching the sword and confirmed that the sword was broken at around the middle of the blade. The materials to make it were of an even higher class than the ones used in shouka (currency crystals) minting – it was a silver greatsword. Yuusuke had also noticed that the blade had quite a lot of points remaining in the battle parameters customization window.

"This sword, did it break in the battle with those beasts that attacked the farm?"(Yuusuke)

"No… Before I entered Fonclanc kingdom, I have wandered through Blue Garden territory. The sword broke when I had to fight those guys."(Shinha)

He traveled through Blue Garden, mostly through forests, trying to avoid the main roads as much as he possibly could. While traveling along the country border, he once encountered a small work force group who seemed to be the ones at fault for damaging the sword. Isotta listened to his tale, with eyes wide from astonishment as Yuusuke proposed to fix the sword.

"Do you mind if I fix it? It seems to be a good quality sword already, but I think I can add some enchantments to it."(Yuusuke)

Isotta was astonished as she listened to their conversation, unable to ignore the plethora of hints about the origins of this mysterious traveler. Yuusuke, however, showed no ill emotions and that piqued Shinha's interest even more.

Anyone holding a military position, after hearing this tale, would be reminded of [a certain place] that Yuusuke did not know of yet. Because Shinha did not know of Yuusuke, he accepted Yuusuke's ignorance as profound tolerance. While not necessarily a mistake, it was a misunderstanding.

Knowing that a hero of Gearhawk was before him and wanting to see his power firsthand, Shinha allowed Yuusuke to repair the sword.

Yuusuke meddled in the customization menu for a while, and after looking through the customization options available, Yuusuke asked Shinha a variety of questions.

"That's right… to kill a human, I think that the sword should be lighter, but if it were to become too light its power would become unreliable in turn."(Shinha)

According to Shinha, it was troubling if the blade was too focused on killing, so he asked to leave the offensive properties unchanged. Instead of the killing potential, he wanted the blades fighting potential to be maxed out, so he asked to set the blade's endurance parameter to be as high as possible.

Moreover the sword gained an attack speed buff, and, taking into consideration that the traveler is a lone person, it was also enchanted with strength recovery and healing effects.

Shinha viewed Yuusuke, who was loitering with his finger in the air before a broken sword while asking various questions about battle style and battle preferences, as a crafting type divine arts user that used such chatter to allow the customer to relax while moving the finger as a means to raising his concentration.

To these craftsmen the questions themselves did not have any substantial meaning.

Fixing a broken sword required a lot of concentration which the man before him probably reached by chatting. Now that he thought of it, the very divine arts craftsman that crafted him this blade also was a very talkative person who only stopped talking when he had to be extremely careful.

"Hmm, this should do it… Execute!"(Yuusuke)

The silver greatsword was enveloped in light. Isotta was already used to this light and viewed the customization with a [what a beautiful light] expression on her face, while her parents were fascinated by the light effects.

Shinha, having traveled various countries and seen various divine arts, also saw such an effect for the first time. After a while, the light subsided, leaving only the shining particles fluttering in the air and a greatsword with a beautiful silver blade lying on the floor.

"I added a healing effect just in case. I think it should also be able to heal your current wounds."(Yuusuke)

"Healing effect?"(Shinha)

Doubting Yuusuke's words Shinha picked up the sword. The moment he touched it, Shinha felt power surging throughout all his body and his wounds suddenly became hot and started to itch.

"This is…!"(Shinha)

Untying the bandage, Shinha saw that his wound which ran from his back to the chest through the flank, was slowly closing. The healing effect was comparable to a considerably skilled healing type water arts user, but Shinha could not hide his astonishment for his prized sword to show such an effect.

"Firstly, as requested I left the attack power unchanged, later on I modified the attack speed and stamina." (Yuusuke)

"As requested…"(Shinha)

Yuusuke proposed Shinha to try out the improvements on the sword as he was inspecting the condition of the blade. But first, the sword was given to Isotta's parents, so their injuries could be healed as well. Afterwards Yuusuke went outside and, after locating a suitable plot of land, started customizing the ground to create a training dummy.

In the meantime, Shinha was practicing with the sword to get his body used to the attack speed buff. The blade obviously did not become lighter yet he was able to swing it much faster.

"The training dummy is done," informed Yuusuke, as he began showing at something m that looked like an earth golem. It was made from the soil, but it was as hard as rock. Shinha was startled by the sudden appearance of the training dummy, but as he wanted to ascertain the strength of his sword, he asked, "Can I try out my sword on that?"

"Sure. The sword was pretty tough to begin with, so there shouldn't be any

problems.”(Yuusuke)

Being assured by Yuusuke that there is no way this sword would dull or break, Shinha was only half convinced as he faced the scarecrows/training dummies made from earth and stones.

The training dummies were aligned in a triangle pattern. Shinha lowered his back and instantly slashed two of them. The bisected remains spun in the air from the power of the slash.

“WOW! Amazing!”(Yuusuke)

“…That surprised me. The speed of the sword was great”(Shinha)

Checking if there was any damage to the blade of his sword, Shinha could not withhold his smile as he marveled at his own reflection in the sword. Isotta hid behind Yuusuke’s back after witnessing this slightly wild, strong smile.

After marveling at his blade for a while, Shinha returned it to the scabbard, thanked Yuusuke, and asked a question as if ascertaining something.

“I am thankful to you from all my heart. Still, doing so much… for a stranger like me.. is it alright with you? After all I am an [artless].”(Shinha)

“Aaah. I am not a person to prejudice people like that. You helped the parents of my subordinate. This is my token of gratitude. You will accept it, won’t you?”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke also asked him to keep the fact of him being able to grant various special effects to items to himself. A smile of a person enjoying something from the depths of his heart, resembling Violet’s smile, appeared on Shinha’s face as he understood that Yuusuke was not lying.

“You are an interesting divine arts user. I am Shinha Trueyard of Gazzetta. I will become your strength one day.“(Shinha)

Yuusuke firmly shook Shinha’s right hand, which he offered after saying his thanks. Shinha continued to analyze the guy that he had found interest in, as Yuusuke replied to the handshake he viewed as an ordinary action.

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Watching a view of a Sanc Adiet street that was gradually enveloped by the evening, Yuusuke headed towards the guard station alongside Isotta. Having had his sword fixed and body healed, Shinha said that he will carry on with his journeys after spending the night in the city.

“Come to think of it, people of the [artless] district interacted normally with you, Isotta.”(Yuusuke)

“Yes, I am… it was because I was living there since I was little.”(Isotta)

Yuusuke asked if there were any other guards that were close with the [artless]. Isotta answered that by silently shaking her head.

“Because everyone… fears the guards. Whenever divine arts users get involved, it always means trouble.”(Isotta)

“Are they always at a disadvantage?”(Yuusuke)

Isotta nodded, shaking her short green hair.

“Hmmmm…”(Yuusuke)

The caste system was based on the faith in the four great gods. Most of the people were able to use the divine arts as a sign of protection from either of the gods and the people who could not use the divine arts were thought to have not been blessed by any of the gods.

Because the caste issue was deeply rooted in the country’s religion, raising the status of the [artless] people was a very difficult problem. Still, this problem and the problem of guards not performing their duties were entirely different issues. Yuusuke believed that trouble… crime control had nothing to do with being the divine arts users or the [artless].

“No matter what social differences they have, no one should cut corners when public safety or order is concerned.”(Yuusuke)

“Captain…?”(Isotta)

Thus Yuusuke became engrossed with thinking of a way to lessen the chasm between the people.

Chapter 19: True state of the Blue Garden

Before dawn—

In the shadow of the huge protective wall of the city fortress Paula, Zeshald was summarizing the information that he had gathered on the internal situation of Blue Garden, while deciding on his future actions according to the information about the current state of Fonclanc, which he obtained from a collaborator (Reifold).

"I see, so Yuusuke performed splendidly this time. Still, even just listening to what he had done… his power seems tremendous."(Zeshald)

"Even though I have expected something like that from him, he has astounded me as well."(Reifold)

Reifold laughed even though he himself nearly got caught in the mayhem.

Right now the fortress city Paula was concerned with restoring their combat strength due to the annihilation of the wind troupe. Divine arts military groups were swarmed with recruitment and conscription applications. Because of that, Zeshald's surveillance get looser, day by day.

"I will soon go meet with the water priestess [Queen]."(Zeshald)

"In the main capital, Cofta?"(Reifold)

When the country was established, the believers of the water god Shalnar flocked around the temple and eventually settled down. Afterwards they created a small kingdom. The nation was officially ruled by a queen, who had a massive support from her citizens and resided in the Shalnar temple-castle at the heart of Cofta.

Currently the country was actually ruled from the second capital – the fortress city of Paula. Izapnar, who was the ruler of this city, had nearly absolute control of militaristic and civilian affairs of the country. It could be said, that the country was controlled from the council room situated in the underground level of the fortress.

There was no antagonism between the water priestess, queen Rishause, and the supreme commander Izapnar. However, it did not mean that their political views and opinions were the same. Their relation was more akin to mutual ignorance, as both capitals were ruled independently.

Looking at this situation, Zeshald saw it as an opportunity that he could take advantage of.

"In that case, I should deliver this information to the other side (Fonclanc)."(Reifold)

"I am sorry to make you do this all the time."(Zeshald)

"Don't mind it. I have already received a reward from Yuusuke."(Reifold)

"Reward?"(Zeshald)

Reifold took out a small trinket, resembling an insect, and showed it to the confused

Zeshald.

"This fishing hook is amazing."(Reifold)

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Around the same time that Yuusuke spotted Isotta on the streets of Sanc Adiet, Zeshald was walking along the road leading from the city center up to the main fortress of Paula. Most of the common people lived in the north side of the fortress city, slightly away from the city center. Meanwhile the important facilities were concentrated in the fortress constructed below the city center.

Paula was built at the foot of Bouzas mountain range that occupied more than half of Blue Garden's territory. The fortress that Zeshald was walking towards, looked like a semicircle wall with a huge circumference. Its purpose was to protect against attacks from the kingdom of Fonclanc. Despite the fact that this road was far away from the city center, many mobile street stalls lined up against it.

Every divine arts organization had its residential and training quarters inside these walls. There were also civilians and divine arts militia who lived farther away from the city center. Because of that, there were a lot of vacant rooms the militias could declare [belonging to "this and that" group] and use it relatively freely.

"…Hmm."(Zeshald)

As Zeshald walked through one such lines of mobile stalls, he stopped as something caught his interest. Several [artless] people, wearing slave collars, crowded around one stand. One of them seemed to have been injured in the leg. This person sat down as to lessen the burden on her leg, but she was constantly worried about slight bleeding.

Zeshald slowly approached her and healed the injury with his heading arts. Woman, with a thankful expression on her face, wanted to say something as a thanks but her expression changed to fear as she was whipped by her master for speaking on her own accord.

"That is enough!. He can understand you without speaking."(Whipping man)

"…"(Woman)

The [artless] woman lowered her head. At that time a man, who was seemingly their master, came out of the shop and spoke in a commanding voice.

"Did you do something to my artless?"(Slave owner)

"No, I saw that one of them was injured so I healed her."(Zeshald)

"?…! Yo-you are…Head instructor Zeshald!"(Slave owner)

As this goon recognized Zeshald, the two hastily changed their attitudes. In addition to being a valuable and talented water arts user, Zeshald had quite some influence in the Blue Garden. In between these facts, Zeshald's mastery of water arts was especially well known throughout the fortress city.

"Oooh so that's how it was, however… the stock we have now is but the leftovers."(Slave

owner)

“Don’t worry. Healing is my hobby so don’t mind about what I just did.”(Zeshald)

As the slave merchant hesitated about how to reward Zeshald, the head instructor waved it off with “I don’t need any money.” After the slave merchant left, taking all of the slaves with him, Zeshald breathed a sigh while thinking of the treatment of the [artless] in this country.

In a country with a caste system, the [artless] were treated as people that have not been blessed by either of the gods. However in Blue Garden, a country that boasted of equality between the divine arts users, those that could not use any divine arts were treated as they were not even human.

“Head instructor Zeshald!”(Plausha)

“Hm? Ah, Plausha-kun? Are you healthy enough to go out already?”(Zeshald)

“Yes, I am so sorry to have worried you… Come tomorrow, I will be able to resume training so I will be in your care again.”(Plausha)

A female water arts user cadet greeted Zeshald. Some days ago she suddenly took a break from her training, but it seems that her aim to join the water troupe had not wavered.

“I have decided on it a long time ago but… my sister is not here anymore.”(Plausha)

“… I see…”(Zeshald)

Last information regarding her sister came from Gearhawk fortress. Afterwards her body was returned by Fonclanc. Plausha’s form, standing dumbfounded before the slightly mangled corpse of her sister, was still fresh in Zeshald’s mind. To brighten up the atmosphere, Plausha changed the topic of their discussion.

“By the way, head instructor when you lived in Fonclanc, you used to keep a lot of [artless]. Were you using them for some water arts experiments?”(Plausha)

“No, I lived along with them in their village.”(Zeshald)

“Eh? Along with the [artless]?”(Plausha)

Plausha was completely stupefied on how could Zeshald not keep at least one [artless] in his house.

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“This is a difficult problem alright.”(Violet)

“It seems so.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke immediately reported to Violet of what he had learnt that day upon returning to the castle. As he was talking about Shinha, surprise showed on Violet’s face for a moment. Krielov’s face color changed and he jumped out from his seat, but was properly restrained by Violet who forbade him from ever speaking about this.

Thus, Yuusuke was also forbidden from talking to anyone about this matter. Yuusuke nodded, accepting these restrictions after being told that the details will be explained to him at a later time, as he understood that he got himself into some complicated mess.

Afterwards they discussed [artless] problems and the relationship between the [artless] and the arts users. Violet crossed her arms and replied to Yuusuke that giving orders to the common guards and reforming the public opinion might be difficult as this solution also involved religious beliefs.

"To begin with, trying to change the very foundations of the country would throw Fonclanc into utter chaos."(Violet)

"I guess so."(Yuusuke)

"If that happened, you would have to rely on your own strength, right?"(Violet)

"Judging by the numbers alone, we, divine arts users, outnumber artless. In the end, the artless people would probably be forced into an even harsher conditions."(Krielov)

Reasoning about how to increase the social position and rights of the [artless] within the current caste system, Krielov speculated that there is a possibility of improving the current [artless] stereotype over the next few decades by educating children about the improvement of the [artless] rights.

However, this method would be impossible to execute as it would be surely met with opposition.

"Still, something can be done regarding public order and discrimination."(Krielov)

"Do you have some good plan?"(Yuusuke)

"It's simple. Using [knight's honor] as a reason we can tighten guards' attitude about their duties."(Krielov)

"Oooh, as expected of an elite! It's a really great idea, but…"(Yuusuke)

A shade of disappointment began to show on Krielov's face, as Yuusuke denounced his idea explaining what value does [honor] hold to [simple guards] in a slightly apologetic tone. They used their wages to eat, and you can't eat honor. It was that simple.

"I guess they would value making their living over the pride and honor."(Krielov)

Presented with a choice between family and pride, ordinary people would choose family. Therefore, the solution would first need to be suitable for them. While it could not be said that pride and honor were worthless, these people could not fill their mouths with it.

"Well, it's not that I completely disagree with your opinion."(Yuusuke)

"Hmm… certainly… Our king also prefers truth over honor."(Krielov)

While Krielov grumbled, thinking about this as more and more wrinkles appeared on his forehead, Violet, taking over his place in the discussion, nodded while remembering

that the corruption and bribes, rampant amongst the bureaucrats, obviously were also present between the common guards as well as the commoners.

"Changing the common sense might not be easy, however, with the cooperation of the top brass of the country, there might be a quick and easy method to ease the situation."(Violet)

"Oooh? And what is that method?"(Yuusuke)

"Announcing a law protecting the [artless], " Violet cut to the chase.

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"Faatheerr~~ Please hear me out, I have a request for you~"(Violet)

The king was then asked to think of some appropriate reason to issue a law protecting the [artless]. There were few slavers (owners) in Fonclanc, compared to Blue Garden, so even if such law was to be issued, there would be few people who would be troubled by it.

Slavery was not illegal in Fonclanc, but [artless] were treated as little more than slaves. Because of the minute differences in treatment towards the [artless], the king considered that the effect of the protection law would be minimal. Incidentally, the number of slaves was greater than the number of divine arts users and this was true with other countries as well. The quality of the slaves was closely linked to the status of the slave owner. If one could afford to keep arts users slaves, he was seen as someone of a higher status than the one with only [artless] slaves.

"Lady Violet has started blabbering strange things again."(Bureaucrat A)

"It's because of the influence of that man. What is the point of a law, protecting the [artless] and the like?"(Bureaucrat B)

As bureaucrats whispered this in secret, king Esvobus allowed Violet to have her way (after being assaulted by her) and she quickly left the audience room (skipping) to return to Yuusuke so they could work out the contents of this law.

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The training facility, used specifically for training the elites, was located near the second capital, Paula, slightly inside the mountain range near where the fortress city was built. The institution was similar to a military academy, where facilities are reserved only for the elite of high social standing whom were set to join one of the elite military groups.

A gravel mountain road led to the gates of this facility. From this road, you could reach the road leading to the Blue Garden's first capital, Cofta.

The City of Cofta spread around the Shalnar's temple. The only open space was near the entrance to the summit, thus countless living quarters and facilities were situated in the tunnels, dug within the mountain. This city was the capital which was built at the highest altitude on the mountains in Kaltcio.

The temple on the summit acted as a royal castle. Queen Rishause, who was also the priestess of Shalnar, desired nothing more than a quiet life. She sighed melancholically,

having received a letter that the consul had delivered to her. Besides the audience request, only the sender's name, Zeshald, was written in it.

He was a former royal divine arts instructor of Fonclanc, who had recently taken up the position of head instructor of the divine arts in Blue Garden. Thinking that the supreme commander Izapnar was involved again, her mood became heavy.

Fourteen years ago when her father, the founder of the nation, died Izapnar, devoted close aide of the father, was appointed an official guardian of the then sixteen year old queen until her official enthronement. Izapnar worked diligently, and through his devotion, the emerging country became a major power on par with powerful nations like Fonclanc. For his deeds, people started to worship him as a symbol of Blue Garden. Thus the support he received from the masses was enormous.

Izapnar, using the sense of impending danger and fall of a country that people felt after their king's death, started to carry out a secret project in order to protect the country from its neighbors. He hastened the construction of the defensive fortress Paula, which purpose was to protect the country from Fonclanc. During this construction project, his faction steadily became the center of the political world of his country.

Although former royalists and palace officials expressed concern regarding his rapid rise to power, they avoided criticizing him and believed and supported him as he had the trust of the royal figurehead, Rishause, and carried the authority of the king.

Around the time of the queen's enthronement, it came to light that Izapnar's loyalty lied with the late king and not with the princess. A vague shade of ambition could also be felt from his actions. However, as she had no one to rely on, Rishause could only treat him as former king's loyal retainer.

As a result, everything from daily tasks to the construction orders, Rishause was informed long after these events happened.

"I guess it's impossible… to decline the audience."(Rishause)

Sighing once again, Rishause called her close aide.

Chapter 20: Turning the tide

"Yuusuke how much do you know about Gazetta?"(Violet)

"I only know the name"(Yuusuke)

"I see, I myself do not know much either"(Violet)

"What the hell!?"(Yuusuke)

After getting the promise of protection for the artless from King Esvosbus, Violet suddenly remember about Simba, who was in the contents of the stories that Yuusuke had talked about. It might become a reference that would be useful in the future.

"I do not know the details, all that I know is the information provided by Zeshald. The king of that country is a artless."(Violet)

"Does that mean it is a country formed by the artless?"(Yuusuke)

Violet, who doesn't really know the answer, looked towards Krielov. "So whatcha wanna know?" as Krielov began to exchange glances, while looking reluctant to share his information about the country of Gazzetta.

Majority of the borders of Gazzetta is next to Nonsense*, and most of its land is comprised of rugged mountains. Near the borders of Blue garden, there is a capital-like city, although there is nothing special about this city, it received an impression due to how the city was run by ordinary people. (TLN: hmm baka & champion said this might cause a problem, so their suggested name for that country is nossentes)

Though the imperial capital is located somewhere within the vast mountain ranges where the artless king reigns. Due to the rugged mountains of Gazzetta, it serves as a natural training grounds for warriors, thus a great number of "Artless Warriors" have been brought up there.

"Although, Blue Garden and Nonsense have known the presences of these Artless Warriors, they have always diverted their eyes from them."(Krielov)

He began to speak softly, 'As a matter of fact, while comparing the [Artless] with the divine art users, it seems that they have a better basic body constitution and excellent life force when the scholars were researching on them', spoke Krielov while trying to hide his voice.

These are the contents of the research results and are not released to the general public. It is known only to a cellular of officials and scholars who are part of the national defense. An idea popped up into Yuusuke's mind while he was listening to the story. From his experience, not once but twice, Sun and Aunt Bahana gave off the impression that "they look thin but they have the strength."

"It's a fact, that one could not sense the power of divine arts from the [Artless], it will be difficult even for the wind arts users to find them if they were to erase the signs of their movement."

For a frontal attack, the attack based divine arts user will be advantageous, but there

are limits while charging towards a bow user.

The presences of these [Artless Warriors] were known as rumors amongst the soldiers. Such talks of a divine arts free warrior, who had defeated the soldiers, could not be spoken out loudly. As said, of course it must be known that a [normal warrior] level had caused this incident so that it would be advantageous to the people.

"hmm, I wonder, are the [Artless] actually a variant of a warrior class...? Assuming so ~~"(Yuusuke)

"What do you mean by that?" (Violet)

As Violet tilted her head while having a question mark above her head. Yuusuke began to talk about his idea that he have came up with.

The [Artless] within the domain of Fonclanc will be appointed as cleaners of Sanc Adiet.

The [Artless] will be responsible for the cleaning of each districts in the city.

The [Artless] will not be forced to do cleaning.

The cleaning remuneration will be funded by the palace.

"Cleaners.....so we are going to place [Artless] in the city?"(Violet)

"Hmm, so in the form of a palace hiring, to restraint outlawry."(Krielov)

As of now, the town cleaning is done by a few day laborers every month. By using the wind arts, one can easily blow away the trash, and by using the water arts, one can rinse the stone pavement. However, the trash are being blown off to the back alleys of the city and the washed cobbled stones aren't really cleaned properly as it is an uneven road.

Although the noble and middle class districts streets looks beautiful, if one were to go around the back ~~(you know what it mean). Due to him running around the city for the past few days, Yuusuke noticed this problem.

"Well, I understand that there will be people from the noble districts who will disapprove of this arrangement if we immediately apply it over there, so we should test it out with the commoner district first." (Yuusuke)

For each of the districts, we will divide it into partitions and have a supervising soldier who will be responsible for the cleaning supervision of that area. Yuusuke will be creating and providing the tools for cleaning. For the payment and compensation, there currently isn't any estimated budget decided for it yet, thus it will be determined through a consultation with the person in charge of accounting.

"....I can see the aim of it, but will we get the results we want?"(Krielov)

There is the question of whether there will be discontent from the [Artless]. In the first place, this isn't a compulsory thing, so the degree of participation expected from the [Artless] might be zero. Against Krielov’s concerns, Yuusuke said "First, we need to create an environment to explain how this work to them."

"The captain of the fire god corps Krielov, haven't been walking along the lower streets of the city, lately, right? I do not know whether you know it or not, but you're a pretty famous figure amongst the [Artless]"

The [Artless] who gathers around the outskirts of the city make their livelihood by being hired as luggage boys or instant servants. Being hired as a caretaker for wagons/carriages, their work have been sincerely appreciated for the first time, but the level of recognition is only established in the city residents and merchants consciousness.

A Great example is Isotta, she had been together with the [Artless], whom were staying in the outskirts of Sanc Adiet for a long time while watching the development of the city. Not only that, the kids of the commoner districts have many experiences playing with the [Artless] kids in the area.

After growing up, while there were people who started to discriminate the [Artless], but there were those adults who still hold a relationship as friends with them.

"Those who were born and grew up in the middle class and noble districts would not have went down to the commoner district to play, thus I believe they would not be so understanding."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke who was deep in thoughts, wondering and pointed out, why did the 4 great gods' faith have been convincing and imprinting the difference between the children of "humble birth".

"I do not know much details about this, but from the doctrines of the 4 great gods faith, I wonder does it have anything regarding the interaction with the [Artless]?" (Krielov)

"Hm? Come to think of it, to suddenly come up with that.....do you know something Krielov?"(Yuusuke)

"There is a saying in a passage [Those who do not receive the blessings of the god shalt be exiled from his land]...."

Where is [his land] ? As there wasn't anything else that depicts this, thus the question became just a joke. But due to this saying, they used it as a doctrine for the country as an excuse to exile the [Artless], although the existence of extreme racism isn't found.

"Well that should be okay right? Although this maybe off topic, I know of a cult who believe in the doctrine to kill people."(Krielov)

If a person opposed this on the grounds of using the doctrines of faith, it would become a difficult problem, but due to Yuusuke's optimism, he believed that there wouldn't be a problem. In the everyday life, the existence of [Artless] have already commonly known as an "accustomed living being" due to human nature.

After a few days, a protection ordinance towards the [Artless] was promulgated, as they will become the cleaners of the city.

Shortly before the promulgation of the protection ordinance in Sanc Adiett~~

-Blue Garden's first capital, the summit city of Cofta.-

From the city, one could ascend a little into the mountains where the temple of shalnar is located. Zeshald was reminiscing his past when he stepped into the city of Cofta, remembering that there was little to no change to the city. He was here for an audience with the water priestess queen, Risha, which was scheduled for tomorrow. (TL: Her full name is Rishause)

If he could create a good relationship with the queen, and becoming a confident while he is at it, his position within Blue Garden will greatly increase.

Unlike the [Artless] in Paula, the ones you see in the city of Cofta are wearing neat clothings and shoes. All of them were walking along the streets without their owners, attached to them were the bracelet of slaves, they were all bright and healthy.

They are the slaves the temple owned, the ownerships of the temple are owned by the queen, thus they are under the patronage as the queen’s slaves, thus they live peacefully within the city. Originally the bracelet that they adorn on their body meant the shackles of slaves, but here it became a shield to protect them.

"To have such a huge difference between the reign of the queen and the supreme commander within the same country...."(Zeshald)

Hearing from students whom I was in charge of their divine arts guidance, they had lived for quite some time in Paula and would always go back for homecoming to visit their parents in Cofta, hearing about the situation there, I was quite taken aback. ~Zeshald pov

Like a fish in a tank, Zeshald was being stared at by the inhabitants of the city while he was exploring the city, due to him being Paula's divine arts instructor, he could feel that the atmosphere of impression around him isn't very calming.

"Fuee.... Tomorrow's audience, I must succeed in it."(Zeshald)

The Next Day ~~

-The Ancient temple of Shalnar located in Bouzas Mountain-

Entering through the first floor entrance, he was greeted by a wide and spacious interior hallway, the temple guard's room and guest rooms, in the inner sanctum was the dormitories of the believers.

After passing the guest rooms, there was the kitchen and dining hall, followed by a washing area, well and a long mid hallway where the quarters for the servants and temple soldiers are located. That hallway was lined up with a room on either sides. It is apparently built in such a way so that the temple soldiers could lineup within the hallway.

At the deepest part of the temple was the office and private room of the consul, and a stairs leading up to the 2nd floor, and right before the stairs was another temple soldier's guard room. The second floor is where the bedroom, archives, dining room and audience room of the water priestess queen is located.

Incidentally, on the other side of the wall of the deepest part of the first floor was a cleansing bath for the queen to use and it is directly connected to the second floor.

Zeshald immediately bowed and kneeled down the moment he passed through into the audience room as Queen Risha was sitting aback on the throne.

"Good Morning, you're beautiful and noble queen Rishause. Thank you for allowing this audience with you, I am blessed by your grace~"(Zeshald)

"Enough with the flattery and formal greetings, Divine Art Instructor Zeshald, what brings you here today?"(Risha)

A dignified voice interrupts Zeshald's speech midway, as she interrupted him asking what did he came to hassle her with. Zeshald was surprised by the image of the Queen he had in mind.

However, due to his many years of experiences, his intuition tells him there is more about Risha than it seems. The image of [acting] floats in his mind.

"As I have joined Blue Garden, I came here to greet your Majesty the queen."(Zeshald)

"O I see. But, it had already been 1 month and 10 days since you have defected to my country."(Risha)

In simple terms, the queen was implying, why the hypocritical since it already have been a long time since his defect, understanding that, her ladies-in-waiting(lady officers) were all laughing at the back.

"That's harsh. However, it was because I was being monitored by many eyes and up until now I didn't have the opportunity to come and greet you."(Zeshald)

"That is not my orders, and what does the opportunity of meeting me have to do with..... these monitoring eyes?"(Risha)

As she stood up and tilts her head, her long water colored hair swings casually as it reaches all the way till her knees. Being an exile from an enemy country it is natural to place watchful eyes around him within the city, but does isn't a reason to not apply an audience with the Queen, it is a question of not doing it and not being able to.

Risha felt that Zeshald wasn't simply here with an intention just for a simple greeting, thus she began inquiring him.

"I wanted to avoid bringing the excellent officers from Supreme Leader Izapnar's Officer halls."(Zeshald)

"......."(Risha)

"I wanted to meet Her Majesty the queen personally, as.....the original Fonclanc Divine Arts Instructor."(Zeshald)

The mood began to become unstable within the audience room. The Ladies-in-waiting mutually wink at each other to show the gesture of vigilance, as though they were trying to call upon the temple soldiers. Risha halt them and gave a gesture to clear out of the room in order to speak to Zeshald alone.

"So what do you mean by that?"(Risha)

"Your Majesty, you are woven with sorrow by the current state of the country."(Zeshald)

Being dissatisfied without being able to do anything about the policies of Supreme leader Izapnar, due to the fact that the real power is being held by that man. Zeshald pointed out that, although the real lineage and authority is her, being frustrated will lead her nowhere, the only way to rebuke is to become a profane lady with control.

"Hold on, Marsha. .....Certainly, it is as you said, I do not think his policies are the best. But..."(Risha)

Although she isn't in favor of the current way the country is run by Izapnar, but that doesn't mean she is in favor of the system in which fonclanc is currently using, as she clearly stated to him. Risha who had inherited the ideal of her late father, only had the chance to practiced it through her small governing domain of Cofta city.

"However, if the current state affairs were to continue, your grace would eventually also be deprived of the authority to run the city of Cofta."(Zeshald)

"YOU RUDE MAN! YOUR THOUGHTLESS WORDS TOWARDS THE MAJESTY IS UNFORGIVING!"(Masha)

The lady-in-waiting who was being called earlier, Masha, was fuming mad and begins forming a dew like divine arts in her hands. But nothing happened, she winked across towards the lady-in-waiting who had the same face and was standing on the opposite side. However, as sudden as it began it ended.

"Hey, Sasha! Let's blast this rude old man who is an utter fool into oblivion!"(Masha)

"Pointless. Her Majesty said to wait. We should discern what he still have to say." (Sasha)

As she replied to her emotional elder sister Masha, Sasha returned her emotion by simply increasing her divine power output. By the way, Masha's water arts is a defensive type where she uses "Water Wall", while Sasha is a attack type where she uses "Water Column".

Either way, there wasn't much water in the vicinity and thus the effect of the water art will not be devastating, there wasn't a breath of Izapnar in them, as Risha personally appointed them as her reliable ladies-in-waiting, it seems as they were once friends.

"Both of you, Calm Down. Mr. Zeshald what is your purpose of coming here?"(Risha)

"A friendship between both the countries if I must say."(Zeshald)

"..... You want me to attack and betray Izapnar?"(Risha)

"If possible, I would like it to end without a fuss."(Zeshald)

After the question of affirmation from the queen. Risha sighed and shook her head. If only such a thing was possible, as she murmured inside her mind.

First and foremost, if we were to lose the leadership of Izapnar now, the country will fall

into chaos. And if that happens, Fonclanc could easily march in with it's army and Blue garden would be utterly destroyed. King Esvosbus is that kind of man.

"I am not trying to hope for the destruction of either Fonclanc or Blue Garden." (Zeshald)

"But, you are trying to destroy that man Izapnar and that will be the resulted situation."(Risha)

"Hohoho with all due respects, Your majesty the queen have underestimated the tremendous support of your authority and your people."(Zeshald)

"I no longer have the power to move the country."(Risha)

[Currently all the military authority have all been seized by Izapnar, no matter how much public support I gain, in the end I am just a figurehead queen.] As her 2 lady-in-waiting begin to worried about her. From the side, you could see how close these 3 people relationship is.

"In order for the queen to move the country, first we would need human talents." (Zeshald)

"What do you mean?"(Risha)

After getting the trust of the queen, Zeshald began to explain his schemes.

Chapter 21: Zeshald's Request

It's been 4 days since the protection ordinance promulgated, and you could already see some of the spearhead representative soldiers guiding the [Artless] cleaners around to the different places in the commoner district. Although the first day had some difficulty due to the many onlookers, from then on it was smooth sailing as there was less confusion, thus changing the city's landscape to a better scenery.

After finishing the report of today's patrol, Yuusuke arrived back at his room and opened the door.

"Yoz"(Reifold)

"What Yoz!"(Yuusuke)

Why is Reifold in my room, isn't this the palace? Yuusuke was looking at him with a surprised and amazed expression. Up until now his actions have all seem to pointed at him being a spy of Blue Garden, but Yuusuke felt that he was not an enemy, thus closing the door behind him before asking, "What's your purpose today?"

"Ah? Isn't it not good to discover an intruder and not call on the knights?"(Reifold)

"You're standing in front of one though. So, what's your reason for coming here?" (Yuusuke)

Responding to what Yuusuke did, Reifold said something amusing,"So someone have grown up." Next, Reifold took out a letter from nowhere and passed it to him. The sender's name was Zeshald.

"This is?"(Yuusuke)

"As you can see, this is Zeshald's letter to you, buddy."(Reifold)

Although Yuusuke had many questions, he wanted to ask him, first he opened the seal and read the letter.

"By the way the contents of the letter was a request for manufacturing of tools and the news of the current situation."(Reifold)

"Shouldn't that be a secret!"(Yuusuke)

In Zeshald's letter, the current situation of Blue Garden was written down, it also contained information about the rumors that were spreading around about the Hero of Gearhawk. Due to these events, there are some confusion within the military reorganization in Paula, using this opportunity they will strike with different kind of actions.

Zeshald met with the queen as he plans to weaken the Blue Garden leadership of the Supreme Leader Officer Izapnar, in order to do this he has to recruit talented people who are still loyal to the queen into the [Queen's Faction].

In the meantime, he is creating the impression of the Queen being the true monarch of Blue Garden, by promoting the Queen as the symbol of the nation, thus becoming a

visible tool of authority.

Zeshald's plan is to return to Paula as the Queen's entourage, along with a tool, created by Yuusuke, advertising it as a sacred treasure bestowed by the Queen. His aim was to target all the bureaucrats with authority who were loyal to the former Blue Garden King, and to expand the influence of the original queen faction, the god militia groups.

As a member of the former king’s bureaucracy faction, Izapnar, in order to avoid criticism, he entrusted the Queen with policy and decision making authority. Up until now, due to the her being suppressed within the central region, the Queen did not really have any power to recruit allies, thus having to no choice but to accept all the petitions unconditionally.

However, by increasing the Queen's faction forces he will cause a decline in Izapnar's political power by pressure. More than authority and decision making, if the Queen is said to be "useless", and if they could not be forced to follow. The worst case, would be that it develops into a civil war, and if by some chance it happens, Fonclanc will side with the Queen's faction.

By building a good relationship with Queen, Fonclanc and Blue Garden will be able to transit into a more peaceful relationship when she obtains absolute power in Blue Garden.

"Hmm....if things were to happened like that, it wouldn't hurt or itch Fonclanc’s side."(Yuusuke)

"Well, it's a fire that's happening on the opposite shore. And we are the one's fanning the flames."(Reifold)

".....huh? "we"....?"(Yuusuke)

"Huh? I thought you had already noticed it. I am a very important double spy, you know."(Reifold)

One could say that his current position in Blue Garden was a spy sent by Blue Garden to Fonclanc, and also a spy by Fonclanc that was sent to Blue Garden. Since, Yuusuke had the vague feeling that it was something along those lines, after hearing him disclose his secret, Yuusuke replied,"Of course."

Seeing that it was a recommendation by Zeshald, Yuusuke let out a sigh as he came to an agreement.

"Alright I understand the situation, I’ll make some kind of fake sacred treasures."(Yuusuke)

"Best Regards, I'll have to head over and report to King Esvosbus. Oh, keep this a secret between us."(Reifold)

"Seeya later," Reifold left his room while waving his hand. Looking at him normally walking away, it was a weird yet a strangely fresh feeling to Yuusuke.

"But that means... Reifold must have learnt about my ability from teacher."(Yuusuke)

In order to counter the supreme influence from the midst of the enemy, one has to

build up his/her forces. Yuusuke understood that this is a role that is in fact very dangerous. Holding the position and title of the Queen's entourage, just by hearing about the situation on the other side, he knows that Zeshald would need the best type of protection.

As Zeshald will be diving deep into such a dangerous job, there would be a risk of assassination once the ball starts rolling. Until the Queen's allies have expanded to a sizable force, it would be a lone struggle within the fortress city.

"If it was like this, the only means I could support him with, are by making these false sacred treasures."(Yuusuke)

As this is a very serious responsibility, Yuusuke begin kneading on the concepts of the Sacred Treasures.

~Council Room, HQ, Central Facility, Fortress City Paula~

In the room, Supreme Leader Izapnar was speaking to his right hand man regarding the incident that had happened recently. It was about Head Instructor Zeshald's lone audience with the Queen Risha.

"By any chance, if we were fully caught off guard by their explanation of us plotting an assassination on the queen..."(Izapnar)

"Perhaps, the majesty might even launch an attack force against us."(Izapnar right hand man interrupts)

Unable to determine what's Zeshald's real intention is, Izapnar had to judge and discuss on with his male subordinate about what choices he had.

"Just as I thought, that incident in the fortress was such a huge blow on us, it will take some time to get over it."(Izapnar)

"Although Zeshald's leadership ability is great, it is such a pity he didn’t work for us." (Izapnar’s right hand man).

Originally, if Zeshald had an audience with Queen Risha on an earlier date, we could have planned an accompanist assassin to go together with him to assassinate Risha and announce the scenario as a conspiracy of Fonclanc, "Zeshald's Secret Mission was to assassinate the Queen".

Although it is a very cliche way of inciting the public anger towards Fonclanc, he himself knew that by doing that, it would increase the momentum towards war, using the queen's death as the fuel for the war, "The War of Vengeance". This would cause the people to fight bravely til the last man standing.

After reducing the number of the Queen's faction left within the country, he gradually reduced the authority which the royal family held. As Zeshald has recently been recruited from Fonclanc, he came looking unprepared to build up the Blue Garden's royal dynasty, as though he stumbled upon this trip.

"Poison seems to have seeped into our midst....the Queen's faction is slowly increasing.

At this rate it will directly lead into a civil war"(Izapnar)

"If that was the case, I believe Fonclanc would support the queen's faction."(Izapnar right hand man)

"!.....That son of a b****! So that was his aim."(Izapnar)

"He might have already set his plan in motion, and started recruiting people to his side."(Izapnar right hand man)

The Queen's popularity amongst the citizens was very high. The different elite groups and the central bureaucracy have a faction which follows the status and lineage, while the militia and central figures follows the old king faction. Thus, the bureaucracy was waiting for the Queen to make her move and side with her faction.

"If only we had something at hand to be of use...."(Izapnar)

"Let's put a collar on someone who is a talented person close to Zeshald. The sooner the better."(Izapnar right hand man)

"Alright, I approve of it, go ahead with it."(Izapnar)

"Then, could you prepare the documents for one of the water members of the Water Troupe."(Izapnar right hand man)

After receiving the documents prepared by Izapnar, his subordinate bowed to the supreme commander as he(subordinate) left the office.

"Ng~~"

It's already late into the night. Yuusuke was in his room, sighing. The sacred treasures that were requested by Zeshald, their abilities weren't up to the desired performance yet. The items that he had created up til now the "status" on them were not strong enough for the items to be considered as a "Sacred Treasure", thus it could not protect Zeshald.

If he were to equip the different parts of the available corps clothing that Yuusuke wore, each and every one of them would stack on the enhancements and achieve the desirable result. But ~~

"If it was just clothes, it would lack the impact.....something else, one equipment which could encompass all the effects, something resembling....."(Yuusuke)

As he was speaking to himself, while murmuring and groaning, a knock echoed from his door. ‘Must be Violet coming to beg for a seasoning for her rara fruits again’, thinking that Yuusuke moved his body up from his bed. Because Violet sometimes come in the middle of the night asking to change the taste of candies while bringing tea to enjoy along with it.

~ Come to think of it, it's been awhile since I made those sweet fruits for Sun.~

Although it is possible for Yuusuke to customize the fruits to the desired sweetness,

however it is impossible to recreate them without the customization ability, and the fruits that he had stocked up in Zeshald's house should have all been consumed already. Now may not be the time for a trip back to Rufk Village, I should request someone to make a delivery.

"This time I'll write a letter, to her....."(Yuuske)

"Yoz, good evening"(Reifold)

When he opened the door, Reifold was standing there.

"Seems like you're not making any progress"(Reifold)

"Yea, I need some new materials"(Yuusuke)

Reifold could see that Yuusuke have hit his current limit of his customize create ability as there were a number of sacred treasure candidates, scattered all across the table and on the floor. Although the shape and appearance was up to one's discretion, the type of materials used, on the other hand, had a huge difference in the enhancement effects.

Scattered across the room were many failed sacred treasure candidates and many prototype jewel material, although he had the image of the item in mind, he seem to be unable to create it, thus hitting his limit.

"I have to make this a specialized water arts item, and I expected a considerable amount of effects on the item, but i can only do it to a certain extend."(Yuusuke)

If the sacred treasure was stolen, it would become a ridiculously powerful item for our enemies. Therefore, I wanted to avoid several options, and prioritize Zeshald's safety more than anything else. And on top of it all, to embody the authority of the Queen on it.

Lost in his thoughts, Yuusuke was spinning a jeweled bracelet atop his finger, while Reifold started grinning as he took out a package from his pocket.

"Hey Buddy, this is a present entrusted to you by King Esvobus."(Reifold)

"From the king? What the hell is this....it's heavy"(Yuusuke)

As he opened the package, lumps of metallic objects fell out. Silver colored heavy metals. He looked into the customization menu, and realized it was a metallic material very similar to the large sword that Shinha wield. At any rate, this seemed like an ancient treasure that had been stored for a very long time within the vaults of the royal treasury.

"Eh~, with this I should certainly be able to create what I wanted."(Yuusuke)

"Okay, I will come by again tomorrow night."(Reifold)

"Hey, wait a sec, I have a request for you."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke picked up a sacred treasure candidate, a jeweled ring and changed it into the "Ring of wind arts". He passed it to Reifold as a reward for delivering a letter and a bag

of rara fruits to the Rufk Village. Reifold was shocked by an unexpected request from Yuusuke and had a unusual surprised look on his face.

That night, on the highway from San Adiet to Rufk Village, a figure of a man running at speeds exceeding that of a normal troop carriage could be seen. Entrusted with a letter while carrying a bag of rara fruits on his back, he was running while ascertaining the effects of the "Ring of Winds Arts" which he had gotten as a reward.

Reifold, who was extremely blessed by the gifts of Wind Arts, could run at a rate in parallel with a normal horse drawn soldier carriage, but with the increased effect of the ring, his speed exceeded his expectations and this was his first time having a sense of fear from running too fast.

Even though he felt like that, he still continued running without sacrificing any speed, wondering how much faster he could go as his curiosity had won over his fears.

~ For a ring that he created in his spare time, the effect is..... outrageous, the existence of Yuusuke is...~

Demonstrating the flexibility of letting his underling lead during chaotic situation. Using his wits to cleanly control the situation within the fortress, thus appealing to his underlings through the depth of his magnanimity. Having built a good relationship with the princess and her entourage, and even having a close friendship with the renowned Volce family's eldest son, who is also a princess fiance candidate...

"So I see, that was what he meant by moving the world....."(Reifold)

On the whole, different from the value of appearance, in the depth of this world's society and methods, there is always a common misunderstanding of that kind.

~The following morning~

Sun woke up and as usual she was about to head towards Aunt Bahana house, right at the entrance of the door was a bag of rara fruits accompanied by a letter. After she read the letter, Sun took up and hugged the bag while being full of smiles.

"Mr. Yuusuke is..... quite an attentive person!"(Sun)

Chapter 22: Harvest festival

“Good evening, Yuusuke.”(Reifold)

“Oh, you came?”(Yuusuke)

As per their agreement the day before, Yuusuke entrusted Reifold with a [sacred treasure of Shalnar]. It was a silver circlet adorned with a lace-like ornament. The item bestowed enchantments befitting its name:

· Water arts amplification effect (buff);

· Physical strength amplification effect (buff);

· Stamina recovery amplification effect (buff);

· Healing effect (buff);

· Poison resistance effect (buff);

· Tranquility (沈静) effect (buff);

· Divine arts resistance amplification effect (buff);

· Physical resistance amplification effect (buff);

· Movement speed amplification effect (buff).

This item allowed it’s wearer to be able to fight for nearly twenty four hours per day with the exception of eating and pooping. Although Zeshald had stamina of an old person, with this tiara a few hours nap would be sufficient for him to regain his strength (as in mana). As for the physical strength, with the enchantments he would be fine with using weapons to his utmost abilities.

“I see, you gain these effects as long as you are wearing it.”(Reifold)

“It felt as if the effects weren’t that strong when I enchanted the rings or bracelets.”(Yuusuke)

As the supportive effects were standard for circlet type items in the games, Yuusuke attempted to recreate these items in this world with great success. Yuusuke explained the theory to Reifold leaving the unexplainable parts out.

“This means… that I, myself am not entirely sure whether the effect will apply or not.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke warned Reifold to keep the other trinket near him at all times as he passed him the ring.

“This is also made from the same metal as the circlet, yet you are not sure if it will work?”(Reifold)

“Well it is a bit too exceptional. It is impossible to try it out.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke avoided explaining the nature of the charm-like item in detail. The item that Yuusuke was not sure of was actually one of the top items in games. Yuusuke silently named it [sacrificial charm].

"Then I will certainly take it. Also, I have properly delivered the package and the letter."(Reifold)

As Reifold said that he placed the [sacred treasure] into his bag and left, rushing as fast as he could towards Blue Garden's first capital, Cofta. Having finished the task Yuusuke sighed as he headed back towards his bed. It was currently the sixteenth day of Shalnar's month of wind. Soon the earth calendar would begin.

"Phew, holidays will start soon here, eh? That item should reach teacher at around the time the harvest festival begins."(Yuusuke)

Although the period varied by country, in Fonclanc, the harvest festival was held between the first and third day of Zalnar's month of fire. As Yuusuke was on holiday from the fifteenth of this month until the fifth of the upcoming month, he had borrowed a god corps carriage and was preparing the equipment needed to harness the horse while thinking of what souvenirs he should buy for the villagers.

Since he kept Zeshald's carefree attitude towards the villagers in mind, he didn't think too much of what he should buy for them, but there was no way he could be so carefree when it came to Sun. Yuusuke was deeply concerned with this subject as he thought of what clothes should he buy for the girl.

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–Paula's central command, council room–

Plausha was lost on what to do as she was overlooking the private room that she was allotted in the barrack's section.

["Is this really alright?"](Plausha)

She was thinking about the secret agreement that she had agreed on the other day with Volmes, leader of the fire troupe and confidant of the supreme commander Izapnar. Her orders were to stay close to head instructor Zeshald and report upon his movements. In exchange she would be allowed to join the water troupe as well as provided information about the person who killed her sister.

"– You? You are Plausha kun, right?"(??)

"– Eh? Y-Yes. I'm Plausha."(Plausha)

She was studying at home as the head instructor had traveled to Cofta, when she was suddenly called to central command. Stupefied, Plausha rushed over to the institution where fire troupe leader Volmes had given her this secret mission and provided her with a letter of recommendation for the water troupe.

"To spy on the head instructor… why would you want to do that?"(Plausha)

"Zeshald shi, he might be deceiving us."(Volmes) (TN: 氏 or shi is a honorific that is between san and sama in terms of politeness source: http://www.wa-

pedia.com/language/japanese_suffixes.shtml)

“You mean, he’s a Fonclanc spy…?”(Plausha)

“Mhm, to be frank, that’s what I mean.”(Volmes)

Troupe leader Volmes mentioned the head instructor’s actions that had raised doubts about him. One of them was the audience with her majesty, queen Rishause, whom Zeshald sought on his own, without informing the central headquarters of Paula.

“Her majesty, did you know that she gives special treatment to the [artless]?”(Volmes)

“Y-yes… I have been in Cofta before.”(Plausha)

Equal treatment of the [artless], which was an unimaginable sight here in Paula, was actually a common sight in Cofta. It was a political decision that the queen made on her own discretion as she was the sole ruler on the first capital.

“Her majesty was of an ill mind since long ago.”(Volmes)

“Wha…”(Plausha)

Plausha let out a surprised shout as she heard her majesty being treated with such disrespect at the central command. Volmes explained in detail with a pained and sad expression on his face about Cofta’s present condition and the queen’s mental deprive.

— Since her father’s, the late king’s, death, her highness has been slowly losing her mind from the sadness. She declared that the equal treatment of the [artless] was [her father’s dream], although the late king had did that just for his own entertainment. She had left all the tasks related to the management of the country to her guardian, sir Izapnar, and had confided herself within the temple.

“Have you heard that Zeshald shi has been living in the village of the [artless]?”) (Volmes)

“Yes… I have seen him heal an injury on an artless that was owned by someone else. I have asked him about it at that time.”(Plausha)

“Hmm, these actions might have been done in order to test his plan.”(Volmes) TN: (wrote plan, but the kanji reads 訓練 (training, practice))

“… his plan?”(Plausha)

Zeshald could have interacted with the [artless] as his equals so that he could get her majesties attention by showing his concerns towards them. Volmes explained that he could have been living in an [artless] village for this very reason.

“I fear, that there is no doubt that it was all part of his plan to gain a position from her majesty and throw the country into confusion by using his new gained authority.”(Volmes)

“Ple-please wait! Such serious implications, to me…”(Plausha)

“…regarding your sister. The incident in the fortress was really regrettable.”(Volmes)

"!…?"(Plausha)

Izapnar, suddenly changed the topic from telling her about the confusion that could be created behind the scenes to the matter of her sister, who was recently killed in action. Having made sure to have startled her and seeing her slender, shaking shoulders, Volmes finally used his "bait".

"The one responsible for it was an elite knight of Fonclanc, hailed as a hero of the Gearhawk, but… he also appears to have a close relationship with Zeshald san."(Volmes)

"With head instructor…?"(Plausha)

"Your sister was a communication type wind arts user, right? I have heard that she was a valuable member of the wind troupe."(Volmes)

"…yes."(Plausha)

Plausha's was clearly shaken. By doing that, Volmes had given her a reason to spy on Zeshald. Every body of the wind troupe returned by Fonclanc was damaged in some way. By telling her only the part of the truth, Volmes had left the rest of the story for Plausha's imagination and bore even deeper into her heart.

— In the despicable caste system that Fonclanc used, the wind art users were unreasonably treated to be of lower status compared to other divine arts users and were often looked down upon.

"How a female wind arts user with no offensive capabilities would be treated there… I think you can easily imagine that."(Volmes)

"…"(Plausha)

"My subordinates are already trailing him, however they can only do it from afar. That's why I have a lot of expectations from you who are his student."(Volmes)

"I-I can't do such…"(Plausha)

Volmes quickly returned to the main topic while Plausha was still thinking about her sister. She was still confused and overcome by various emotions, thus the girl was pushed further into the corner. By doing that he directed her thoughts the way he wanted. [The head instructor of the divine arts had a connection with the hero of Gearhawk. Her sister's enemy.]

"I…"(Plausha)

— As a member of the water troupe you will be on an equal standing with them. They will probably also attempt to use you.

— It will be sufficient if you would only participate in their meetings and report about them as you get back to your barracks.

Having said that, Volmes presented her with the letter of recommendation for the water troupe and the entrance permit to the central command. Thus now Plausha was inspecting a room in the barracks section of the central command, which was given to

every member of the elite troupes.

“This revenge for my sister. I… what should I do?”(Plausha)

Muttering if this is really alright, Plausha closed the door of her private room.

***

Shalnar’s month of wind, nineteenth day ~

As the holidays had come, Yuusuke visited the palace god corps waiting room early in the morning. Elite knights from the renowned lineages had gathered in this overly extravagant waiting room thus the atmosphere in the room was more akin to a gentleman lounge.

[“The interior is terrible, but otherwise it is no different from the room downstairs.”] (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke, was holding souvenirs for his friends in the Rufk village that he had bought the day before, which looked slightly inappropriate in this setting, but as he was a captain on the famous darkness god corps not one person in the room complained about this.

“Ah, here you are. Heeeey, Hivodir~”(Yuusuke)

“You again… It’s rare enough for you to show your face here, moreover with such an unusual appearance.”(Hivodir)

Looking at Yuusuke who looked like a grandma with oversized grocery bags, Hivodir shook his head while breathing a sigh. As Hivodir was showing his bewilderment, Yuusuke placed a ring between his thumb and index fingers and flinged it towards the fiancé candidate. Thinking what it might be, Hivodir tried to catch it… but got hit by it in the face.

“Bitch! Why did you do it so suddenly? … Wait… can this be?”(Hivodir)

“It’s the fire arts ring that I finished yesterday. Truthfully, I wanted to give them to the commanding officers of every corps before anyone else, but you were begging for it so much that I decided to give it to you first.”(Yuusuke)

Hearing this, commanding officers of each of the corps looked at him with sharp glances. The nearby fire corps commanding officer gave him an exceptionally sharp look.

“Ahahaha~ It seems that I have earnt it. It feels as a result of our deepening friendship!”(Hivodir)

Hivodir brushed off the pressure from these glances as if it did not concern him at all. He proudly put the ring on and left the waiting room to test the effect of the buff in the training grounds. However, inside he was sweating buckets of cold sweat which he somehow managed to cover up with his noble-like attitude.

***

Having descended to the carriage station, Yuusuke met his subordinates at the gate to the city. The entirety of the darkness god corps were on holiday, so they were also on a special leave. It seems that Isotta was also returning home to her family in the [artless] district.

"Good morning, Captain. Are you returning to the village today as well?"(Isotta)

"Should I help you with the loading of your baggage?"(Vermeer)

"Ah, thanks Vermeer. Aisha, are you returning home as well?"(Yuusuke)

Aisha and Shaheed seemed to have plans to spend their vacation at their parent's homes in the middle class district. Vermeer had nothing planned for his holiday so he planned to slack off in the palace after seeing his squad mates off. Fonke had plans to go on a bar tour and to hang out at the singertown (Machiuta), the so called red lights district. (TN: Prostitutes are called nightsingers in Kaltcio thus the name singertown).

"That's right, did her highness agree to let you leave?"(Vermeer)

"Violet? Hmh, she was unexpectedly OK with it. I might have even slightly changed my opinion about her…"(Yuusuke)

When Yuusuke told Violet that he had planned to return to Rufk village during his holiday it seemed that the princess had plans to drag him along and go incognito to the harvest festival. However, hearing that he wanted to spend some time with Sun in the village, Violet seemed to understand Yuusuke and replied with a "In that case it can't be helped." Violet seemed to have been worried about Sun who was probably as dispirited as her regarding Zeshald's defection, and Yuusuke apologized to the girl in his mind after seeing this kind side of her's.

Having settled everything he had to do, Yuusuke set off towards Rufk village that he had left twenty nine days ago.

***

The horse was tirelessly pulling the knight corps carriage as his harness was customized with fatigue restoration effect. When he arrived at the Rufk village, it was slightly past noon. The traveling speed was similar to the time when he traveled to the city with Zeshald.

Yuusuke felt slightly nostalgic as he passed through the log bridge over the protective trench, which was surrounding the village. Yuusuke arrived around the time that villagers took a break from their daily tasks and a familiar face smiled as he saw Yuusuke approaching. As a complementary for Yuusuke's service at the palace, Rufk village's treatment improved as well. Villagers received cattle as well as seeds and fertilizers so the fields around of village visibly increased.

Having stopped the wagon near Zeshald's house, Yuusuke saw Sun's figure through the opened door. Yuusuke mentioned his return on this day in the letter that he asked Reifold to deliver to the village, so Sun was not surprised to see him. Instead, she greeted him with the humble smile that did not change since Yuusuke left the village, and the black haired youth smiled in turn.

Sun was halfway on her way to the cart, when a man, seemingly a villager that Yuusuke

did not know that well, appeared in the doorway.

“Welcome back, Yuusuke san.”(Sun)

“I’m home, Sun.”(Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke got off of the wagon he exchanged the greetings with Sun and asked her, “Who is he?,” about the man that stood behind the girl. According to Sun’s story, he was a childhood friend that was estranged with her up until recently when Yuusuke left.

He seemed to have started visiting Sun often as he became worried that she was feeling lonely after Zeshald left the village, followed by Yuusuke.

“Nice to meet you, I’m Thalys.”(Thalys)

“I’m Yuusuke, nice to meet you too.”(Yuusuke)

They exchanged simple greetings. The man had rather short hair and his height was similar to Yuusuke’s. He seemed to be quite cheerful and gave of a feeling quite similar to that of Fonke. All in all, he seemed to be an ordinary young man.

Afterwards, it became completely dark until they finished bringing all of the Yuusuke’s luggage into the house. Having helped bringing the luggage inside, Thalys bid Sun farewell with a “See you tomorrow,” and left.

“Yuusuke! You’re back?”(Bahana)

“Aunt Bahana, I’m back~!”(Yuusuke)

Bahana spotted Yuusuke, who was leading the horse into the stables just as she was returning from the hunt, and called out to him. *Bam Bam,* she struck his back repeatedly as she said, “It’s good to see you back,” with a cheerful voice. She was as strong as usual even if her build looked to be slender. That made Yuusuke think that the rumor he heard at the palace a few days ago, that “[artless] are born fighters” might actually be true.

“Hmm~? What’s that? After all that ruckus about you becoming a hero you did seem not grow any muscles at all?”(Bahana)

“Uhmmm, well that’s because I haven’t done any physical labor.”(Yuusuke)

“Shouldn’t you train your body as well?,” continuing to avoid Bahana’s passes to grab him by his sides to stroke his flank, Yuusuke took out a bowstring that he bought as a souvenir and gave it to the woman.

***

“I see you are as strong as always, aunt Bahana.”(Yuusuke)

“Hehehe. When I heard that you are returning, I have been eager to make you a welcome home meal. I hope you are excited about it?”(Bahana)

After returning home to catch his breath, Yusuke was relaxing at the sofa. As Sun brought him some tea, he asked the girl about the event that will start in a few days’

time. Sun told him that the harvest festival was an event where everyone in the village prepared food, gathered together outside of their houses, and ate it.

"It looks like the festival will be lively this year."(Sun)

"I will enjoy it then."(Yuusuke)

As Sun was sorting through the souvenirs, Yuusuke brought from the city, she noticed a new, high quality dinnerware as well as some cloth. It was a dress most suitable for outdoor use that was of a slightly more mature style than the simple one-piece she had worn in the palace. It looked like she would also be able to wear it while working in the fields

"Hey… this dress."(Sun)

"Ah, this one. I didn't know your tastes so I tried choosing one that I thought would look good on you."(Yuusuke)

"Thank you very much… I truly appreciate it."(Sun)

"I-Is that so. I'm glad."(Yuusuke)

Slightly blushing, Sun smiled and seemed to be grateful from the depths of her heart. Yuusuke nodded, with his face still worried whether the girl liked the present that he bought her.

***

The next day…

As the preparations for the tomorrow's harvest festival were underway in cities, towns, and villages of every country, people of Rufk village also started their preparations for the event. They created the festival grounds in the central plaza of the village by building a bonfire from the oilwood, putting the highly flammable wood in a structure that resembled a well. Afterwards they proceeded to line up the tables to create a single long table for the food.

Yuusuke also planned to help, but he was told off with a "You finally got your holiday so go and rest," thus he proceeded to walk around the village looking at the increasing fields and cattle. The real reason, however, was that even if he wanted to help, Yuusuke was completely ignorant of the preparation process, so there was little that he could help with in the first place.

Middle aged married women were busy with the food preparations while younger women and girls were decorating the plaza. As Yuusuke was wandering through the plaza, he spotted Thalys helping Sun with her work. While Yuusuke was lazing around, thinking that they look good together, he was called out by aunt Bahana.

"Looks like you really have nothing to do, Yuusuke."(Bahana)

"Well, yeah~"(Yuusuke)

Seeing Yuusuke shrug his shoulders, saying that he was not allowed to help, Bahana restlessly looked around and dragged Yuusuke off to a shadow of a building. "What?!

What?!," screamed Yuusuke as he was pushed in his back and led behind the barn. As he murmured something as stupid as "Am I being seduced by a widow," to Bahana, who pressed herself to his back, and properly earnt a flick onto his forehead.

"Stop speaking like an idiot, it's about that girl. We have to talk about Sun."(Bahana)

"Sun?"(Yuusuke)

"After you and Zeshald left the village, Thalys was aiming for her the entire time."(Bahana)

"Those two, aren't they childhood friends?"(Yuusuke)

According to Bahana, even if Thalys was Sun's childhood friend, until now he barely ever paid her any attention. After Zeshald left and Yuusuke got called into governmental service, Sun practically started living by herself. This was the opportunity that he was waiting for.

"If you don't protect her tightly, she will get taken away."(Bahana)

"No, it's not about taking her or not… Getting in between the two people's romance is a bit…"(Yuusuke)

If Sun looked to be troubled by Thalys, Yuusuke would not hesitate and protect her at the first sign of danger, but so far, even if the two were a bit awkward, there were no signs of trouble between them. Moreover, looking at himself, wasn't he the problem in the first place, wondered Yuusuke, as he was perplexed by Bahana's insistence.

Amazed by what he said, Bahana shook her head and insisted that Thalys felt no love towards Sun and only went after her as she was one of the most beautiful girls in the village. Banaha whispered this into Yuusuke's ear after he asked about why did she knew so much about him.

"Thalys is a douche. He's the most wayward amongst his friends. He is only seducing her to be able to brag about the number of girls he had taken."(Bahana)

Apparently, he had also attempted to seduce Bahana. At first, it seemed to be a mischievous and childish prank, but as he saw that seducing her was impossible, he surprisingly attempted to use force. Apparently, Bahana had also responded with force in turn.

["Isn't it alright. Aren't you feeling lonely every night?"](Yuusuke)

["Nice one. But you sure have the nerve to be saying that."](Bahana)

Bam

–Gyaaaaa….

"Well, I could've broken your teeth, so I tried to hold back."

"Sc-scaaary~"(Yuusuke)

Having drawn first blood, Bahana pulled Yuusuke back up. Feignedly clearing her throat

Bahana said:

“Anyhow, it would be best for you… no keep your eyes on that guy at all times.”

As searching for a lover was a side event of the harvest festival, every youth in the village was exhilarated with the prospects of finding his/her pair. Taking advantage of the mood of the festival, even the pushy methods could be used to procure a pair.

“What you said now has made me somewhat worried. I will do something about it just in case.” (Yuusuke)

“I wanted to hear something more akin to [I will always stay by her side]…”(Bahana)

***

On the afternoon, around the time that lunch would be over, the preparation stage was finally done and the village was temporarily enveloped in silence. As the festival would start after sundown, villagers went to rest and get some sleep to prepare for the night. After separating with Bahana, Yuusuke went back home and started customizing accessories. As Sun returned home he walked out of his room.

“Sun.”(Yuusuke)

“Ah? Yuusuke san, you were at home?”(Sun)

Asked Sun as she tilted her head in doubt. She saw Yuusuke at the village plaza so she was sure that he was taking a stroll around the village. While this calmed Yuusuke down a little, he presented Sun with the accessory that he had made earlier.

It was a transparent, slightly whitish ring that he created by customizing a shouka.

“Eh, EH? Uhm… this is…?”(Sun)

“Aunt Bahana insisted that Thalys is dangerous so I created a charm to keep you safe in case something happened.”(Yuusuke)

Having heard this, Sun obediently took the ring although she showed a troubled smile in the meantime. She stared at the ring in her hand as well as into Yuusuke’s face. Yuusuke, his back and eyes starting to feel itchy, tilted his head asking, “Something’s wrong?”

“No…. Thank you very much for worrying about me.”(Sun)

Smiled (said while smiling) Sun as she put the white ring onto her finger.

***

Night—-

Festival began when the sun had set and reached its climax when the midsummer moon had risen above the horizon. The light of the burning pyre illuminated the surrounding tables that were filled with fruit wine and various food and everyone enjoyed the festival until the next morning.

Onlookers cheered for the dancers who danced along the cheerful melody of flute and

drums. There were some people who were also focused only on drinking or eating. A group of several youths separated themselves from the rest. They were lying on each other laps, whispering something sweet to each other.

The festival had this peculiar feeling of disorderly solidarity that reminded a warm wind brushing onto one's skin.

"Yuusuke san, I have heard of your achievements after you became a knight!"(Village girl A)

"Ehh, all of that was just a fluke…"(Yuusuke)

"Please, tell us a story, Yuusuke san."(Village girl B)

"That is… I don't have any pleasant stories to tell…"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke, enjoying the food, got surrounded by village girls whom all began to wage a battle of seduction against him. Usually simple and quiet village girls, drunk on the alcohol and the mood of the harvest festival, became just about bold enough to attempt to seduce themselves a guy.

By the way, they became even more daring during the dance festival, which happened during the month of wind, but this tale would be left for another time.

"Bahana, we're running out of meat."(Villager A)

"Hmm, as expected, the meat is good this year. Everyone just can't get enough of it."(Bahana)

Asked to get more meat, Bahana winked to Sun and left her seat with "I'll be gone for a bit." Having waited for the moment when Bahana's back disappeared in the sea of the villagers, Thalys appeared at Sun's side. In the meantime, Yuusuke was still being assaulted by village girls with more of the reinforcements on their way.

"Ple—ase… Someone… He—lp me."(Yuusuke)

"Haha, he's insanely popular."(Thalys)

"Uhm, it seems so."(Sun)

Thalys looked at Sun's profile as she smiled at Yuusuke's struggles. As Sun put the cup of fruit wine at the table and started standing up from her place, Thalys asked her for something:

"Sun, I am on my way to the well to get chilled fruit. Could you help me?"(Thalys)

"Mhm, sure."(Sun)

As she was being led away by Thalys, she turned back at the plaza once again and, seeing Yuusuke unable to deal with the huge mob that he had lured, she smiled to her companion.

The well was in a place that was slightly separated from the street where the buildings were lined up. As this was a night of the festival, there was sufficient light from the

bonfire for them to be able to see their path. Moonlight also began to shine stronger as the night grew late.

Still, if one strayed off the road even a little bit, it became so dark that one could not see his/her way anymore. Several small farming tool sheds lined along the road to the well. Sun was dragged into one of the sheds which was dimly illuminated by the swaying light from a burning oilwood branch, as she was forced down on a bundle of straw.

"Sun…"(Thalys)

"Tha-Thalys calm down! What the heck has gotten into you?!"(Sun)

"You understand, don't you? Don't try feigning ignorance that you did not know of why you were coming here for?"(Thalys)

"Yo-you are wrong. I never ever thought of or wanted this!"(Sun)

Thalys got on top of Sun who was struggling on the straw bundle and wrapped his arms around the girl's back. He was closing his lips to the girl's hair as if intending to kiss her near her ear. Sun twisted her neck and pushed Thalys in his chest, trying to escape him.

"Guahg…"(Thalys)

It seemed that Thalys, being hit by Sun directly into his solar plexus, suddenly released all the air from his lungs. That made the guy retreat his body back. Having been met with unexpectedly strong opposition, Thalys caught the girl's arms and pushed them down to pin the girl down.

Thalys was thinking that he would paralyze the girl's thoughts by stealing her lips away (kissing her). He had closed his face to the girl, but Sun had managed to push back the arms that he was supposedly pinning her down with.

"Uuuuuugh~~~"(Sun)

"Wh-what? How can you…"(Thalys)

Somehow, Sun was rivaling Thalys in physical strength. Their struggle looked to be about even, but Sun seemed to be the stronger one as she was slowly starting to push Thalys back. Thalys raised his body to put all the strength into his upper body to counter Sun's, seemingly inhuman, strength that was coming out of her slender arms. That instant…

"!!"(Sun)

"Fughg!"(Thalys)

Becoming careless, Thalys left his crotch unprotected and, having received a fatal blow to his precious jewels, passed out with foam coming out of his mouth. The ring that Yuusuke gave to Sun was [the Ring of Strength], an item that dramatically increased its wearer's strength. Having fixed her slightly disarranged clothes, Sun ran out of the shed and explained the circumstances to the guys in the main plaza who were responsible with keeping order during the festival.

“Again, THAT IDIOT!!!…”(Angry old man A)

“Don’t worry Sun chan~. We will show that guy!”(Angry old man B)

Telling Sun that she should breathe in some evening air, the old men had rolled up their sleeves and ran towards the tool shed. Seeing them off, Sun sat on the bench at the village plaza while taking deep breaths. Afterwards, she gently stroked the ring that Yuusuke gave her as a charm.

“… Yuusuke, you dummy…”(Sun)

Whispered Sun silently to the ring, as if kissing it.

***

First day of Zalnar’s month of fire. The festivities for the harvest festival had begun as the moon reached its equinox. Queen Rishause made an important announcement to all the citizens of the Blue Garden.

Head divine arts instructor Zeshald has been appointed her personal entourage. He will henceforth show his loyalty to the queen through his actions at Paula —

This announcement at the beginning of the harvest festival split the reaction of the citizens into two big groups.

Chapter 23: Water mirror

TN: this chapter contians sexual assault/attempted rape and is an extension of the 18th chapter of the manga. If you feel offended by this kind of stuff and have read the manga it is not necessary to read through this chapter to follow the story

Zeshald returned to Paula after receiving the circlet created by Yuusuke. The circlet was said to be a sacred treasure that was bestowed by her majesty queen Rishause. The queen had also made a major announcement at the opening speech during of the harvest festival. Using the combined turmoil of these two events, Zeshald announced the establishment of the [Water Mirror], an organization that was under the queen's direct control.

As the supreme commander Izapnar had mostly foreseen this, he called a meeting of the royalists of the former king and advocated to restrain the forming of [Water Mirror] and avoid putting the country through the Fonclanc's conspiracy.

Still, the former royalists disliked Izapnar's current policies and his view towards the queen so they ignored his warnings. One by one they announced their wishes to become the members of the [Water Mirror] and were welcomed into the upper echelons of the organization. Even if they weren't part of the commanding executives of Paula, they had prior experience of running the country during the former king's reign.

Using their experience and skills from their time on active duty, they had started the [Water Mirror] in no time and turned it into a functioning group. At the same time, as there were a lot of supporters of the queen within the active duty soldiers, many hopeful applications were coming in every day.

Although the members of the elite groups, mostly loyal to Izapnar, skeptically viewed the [Water Mirror], some of them, who were loyal to the former king, saw some meaning in the queen's faction and showed some interest towards its activity.

By the second day of the harvest festival, members and executives of the [Water Mirror] had expanded to one fourth of the general population and the elites of the Blue Garden. And it could be felt that this expansion would further increase after the end of the harvest festival.

"Almost all of the royalist members have been confirmed. There are also signs of some members of the elite groups being swayed towards them."(Volmes)

"Khe… I have expected this, but their influence is becoming bothersome. Where are they planning to create their base of operations?"(Izapnar)

"I'm afraid they seem to be using the empty rooms in a section of the main fortress. They are based in the upper levels. While their defenses are not hard to attack, they are also easy to defend…"(Volmes)

"They are not hard to attack, but spying on them is meaningless, eh?. At any rate the assassination of the queen is now out of the question."(Izapnar)

If the queen would be assassinated now, it would be obvious that the culprit would be the Izapnar's faction. Zeshald's assassination was difficult for the exact same reason, but in this case it could somehow be disguised as an internal strife.

Presently they had to undertake urgent measures to stop the expansion of the [Water Mirror]. Using the festive mood of the harvest festival this organization could gain sufficient power to undertake political actions and increase the influence of the queen. In the worst case scenario there was a possibility of them using the queen's influence to dismiss the supreme commander from his post.

Although it was regretful, Izapnar could not publicly denounce Zeshald's actions to be a plot of Fonclanc.

Although he successfully started rumors that queen's treatment of [artless] in Cofta was like that because [of her wounded heart], he had no leads pointing to Zeshald being a spy of Fonclanc.

Zeshald arrived to Blue Garden after receiving a personal invitation. If he blamed that such a person gained the queen's trust, was directly appointed as her personal aide, and yet was a spy of an enemy country, it would also destroy their own reputation as that would also mean that Paula's central command was also deceived by Fonclanc. They were also in no place to make a protest so, in the end, they would have to deal with the [Water Mirror] as an internal problem.

"There are also reports of Fonclanc movements within their side of the national border."(Volmes)

"Esvobus, that sly rat, order the troops to strengthen the security at the border."(Izapnar)

In this critical moment, Izapnar struggled to deal with the government's affairs trying to preserve the foundations of the Blue Garden dynasty that he had laid during the long years.

***

Third day of the harvest festival, morning. Fonke, performing the duties of a messenger, arrived on a fast horse carrying a message that an emergency meeting was being called and Yuusuke was hurriedly preparing for his departure.

As this was the third day of the festival, a lot of villagers gathered to bid him farewell. Having said that, everyone hesitated to talk. Yuusuke, clad in the uniform of the darkness god corps, returning back to the appointment in the city with a palace knight as his subordinate, it has finally started to sink in for everyone that he really is the man from the gossips, the elite of the palace, the hero of Gearhawk.

"Y-you somehow look like an entirely different person."(Bahana)

Muttered Bahana in an unusually nervous voice. Sun stepped out of the crowd, approached Yuusuke, and softly grabbed his hand before withdrawing her's after a moment, just like that time in the carriage on their trip back from the palace. That made Bahana's eyes go wide from astonishment, as she could only gasp, "Oh my!"

"Good bye Yuusuke san. Take care of yourself."(Sun)

"Ah, I'm off, goodbye Sun."(Yuusuke)

To Yuusuke, this seemed like some sort of good luck charm from Sun, so he received the act naturally. Bahana helplessly hung her head regarding Sun's innocence as Yuusuke waved goodbye to the villagers and boarded the carriage.

***

On the way back to the city, Fonke was responsible for using the wind arts to speed up the journey, thus as simple as the carriage the one they rode in seemed to be, it was able to travel at high speeds. Furthermore, the carriage had its drivability customized so it was able to go at the speeds beyond the usual "high speed" that the wind arts allowed them to.

"I say, isn't the carriage running too fast?"(Fonke)

"I did some reinforcement to the frame, so its fine."(Yuusuke)

After arriving at Sanc Adiet ahead of their schedule, the travelers passed two district gates and arrived at the Volance palace. Along the way, they passed several different divine knights corps carriages. Upon arriving at the parking section of the palace, they saw a number of corps groups that took turn in boarding the carriages and leaving the palace.

"Yuusuke!"(Violet)

Violet, smiling broadly, ran up to Yuusuke and jumped at him and the black haired boy had caught her by pure reflex. While this action caused an uproar amongst the bystanders, Violet continued embracing Yusuke and cried out about Zeshald.

"The grandpa did it! I knew that he was on our side!"(Violet)

Violet was beyond herself because of the recent change of status in Blue Garden. Zeshald's purpose of going there was to create this situation, which meant that he did not betray Fonclanc.

As Yuusuke was not really surprised by that, Violet cheerfully asked him, "Did you already know about it?"

"Princess, please calm down a little bit. …Sir Yuusuke, this time it is an emergency situation, but–"(Krielov)

Having made a short pause, Krielov seemed to intend to brief Yuusuke in on the situation. As it was very urgent, he even seemed to postpone the rearing (education) of the princess. Yuusuke listened carefully for the briefing with the princess hanging slantwise on him.

This time, an organization under the direct control of the queen of Blue Garden started rapidly gaining influence in Paula and a huge coup movement is anticipated in the neighboring country. In response of this situation, a decision for emergency deployment of troops near the Fonclanc-Blue Garden border was announced.

According to these orders, a new fortress was to be urgently constructed at a site slightly away from the ruins of the Gearhawk fortress, and knight corps are to be stationed there. Their orders are to monitor the movements inside Blue Garden and, in case of emergency, respond with utmost haste.

“The advance party has already arrived at the construction site and secured the perimeter. Some time ago, a huge material caravan has departed along with the construction personnel. The first combat detachment along with the military personnel is currently departing as we speak.”(Krielov)

“Your orders are to depart with the corps tomorrow and, after arriving at the site, proceed to help with the construction of the fortress and the necessary facilities.”(Krielov)

“Understood. We are to leave tomorrow and head towards the construction site of the new fortress.”(Yuusuke)

As this was the second time that darkness god corps were ordered to help with the construction of the fortress, Yuusuke headed towards his room to quickly review the model data of the Gearhawk fortress in preparation for tomorrow. Fonke tactfully pointed at Violet, still hanging on Yuusuke’s figure and asked, “Are you alright with this?”

“Princess!”(Krielov)

“Wahaha~”(Violet)

After some time, wrinkles at Krielov’s forehead had yet another chance to become deeper.

***

Paula central command. Congress hall.~

Plausha was walking towards her personal room through the corridor of the lodging section which acted as the barracks for the members of the elite groups. As she was given a room in the elite quarters, it took her an entire day to move her clothes and other belonging from her previous room. When she finally finished moving, the uniform that the other members of her group were wearing had arrived as well.

Afterwards, she proceeded to the headquarters of the [Water Mirror] to apply to become a member there. This was her first step of the secret mission that she was given… but she didn’t feel like she was doing anything at all.

“Haaaah….”(Plausha)

She sighed involuntarily. It looked like the [Water Mirror] was steadily increasing in members in between both the elite soldiers and the common folk. She wanted to get in contact with head instructor Zeshald as soon as possible after joining the organization, but such an important decision was not her’s to make.

[I will go there tomorrow. It is already late today, so I will surely go there tomorrow,] while worrying whether she should delay her action, she noticed a group of four red haired youths, clad in fire troupe uniforms, and she retreated towards the wall. The four also changed their direction and approached Plausha.

Feeling like she’s in a marriage interview, Plausha slowly raised her face. Before she noticed, she got surrounded by the members of the water mirror.

“What’s this? Even though she is wearing the troupe’s uniform, she’s still a brat.”(Redhead A)

“An unfamiliar face… has this kid joined the water troupe?”(Redhead B)

“Eh… uhm…”(Plausha)

“Hey, are you really allowed to be here? Show us your permit!”(Redhead A)

Somehow mistaken for a suspicious person, Plausha tried to take out the facility’s entry permit, but she remembered that she left it somewhere in her room as she did not have to use it since she had shown the first time she had entered the facility. Instead she showed them a tentative water troupe member card.

“Temporary member, is it. In whose name, the leader of the water troupe?”(Redhead A)

“N..no. I was recommended by captain Volmes…”(Plausha)

As Plausha mentioned the name of the captain of the fire troupe, the guys exchanged glances, wondering [Why would their captain of all things recommend someone to be a tentative member of the water troupe?] They became even more suspicious of Plausha as there was no reason nor pretext for why would someone put a person who even had not reached the enlistment age into another corps.

“It-It’s true. Please check with Mr… Captain Volmes! He will confirm it to you!”(Plausha)

“The captain is currently busy. Tell us the reason of why you were given the enrollment permit.”(Redhead C)

“That I… I mean… I have special orders…”(Plausha)

It was impossible for Plausha to disclose her secret mission so she started beating around the bush by only replying, “It’s related to my mission.” The four exchanged looks after hearing this reply and as they started to understand what was happening here, the tension dropped down.

“Oooh, so that’s how it is.”(Redhead A)

“A mission by our captain eh…”(Readhead D)

However, the atmosphere that was supposed to be easing was actually turning into another, improper direction.

“Well, she is pretty nice for a woman.”(Redhead C)

“Well, it’s clear that our captain is not gay.”(Readhead A)

“…?”(Plausha)

Plausha stared blankly at them, thinking [“What are they talking about?”] when one of them suddenly grabbed her from behind, causing the girl to panic. One of the remaining three guys approached Plausha from the front and put his hand under her skirt.

Plausha was of course scared and tried to resist, but the remaining two guys held her

hands down so she could not move at all.

“Wha-what are doing! STOP IT RIGHT NOW!”(Plausha)

“Truth is, we are also on a special mission.”(Readhead A)

“We also want to enjoy a little street singer who found her way here.”(Redhead D)

“NOO! Let me go! LET ME GO YOU BASTARDS!”(Plausha)

The man in front of Plausha inserted his finger into her private parts as she was twisting her body in a hopeless attempt to escape and whispered a threat into her ear.

“Go on try screaming once more and I will cook you down there.”(Redhead B)

“?!!”(Plausha)

Plausha stiffened, her entire body shaking while she even forgot how to breathe. [“So she finally became obedient?,”] thought the four fire troupe dickheads as they started dragging her off to the nearest room.

As Plausha was in a panic, not knowing how to act in this state, the things that she had heard about the elite troupes from her sister were swirling in her head. Her sister mentioned that there were some of these kinds of guys in the troupes, but the elite groups enforced discipline so they had acted gentlemanly– (TN: nice way to think of after one of them just casually fingered you, girl)

[“Why? Why did such things had … at the central command… Sister…!”](Plausha)

As Plausha was praying to her sister, a familiar voice resounded in the hallway.

“You, what the hell are you doing?!”(Volmes)

It was none other than Volmes, confidant of the supreme commander Izapnar, who was walking towards Plausha with a stern look on his face, the clanking sound of his boots resounding in the hallway. Plausha looked at him, pleading for the help, but her voice was still paralyzed from the fear of the finger.

The four exchanged perplexed glances after the entrance of their commander, but soon the relaxed their shoulders and confronted the commander in a light manner.

“Nothing, just training for a special mission.”(Redhead A)

“This cute junior asked us to help in her training.”(Redhead B)

They said this with a wide grin on their faces as they raised up Plausha’s uniform skirt. Plausha’s face blazed red. The next second the cheek of the man that raised her skirt became red along with a dull sound.

Slapping each of his subordinates in succession, Volmes protected Plausha behind his back as he calmly spoke with a disgruntled expression.

“You seem to have misunderstood something. She is a… relative of a wind troupe member who was killed at the Gearhawk. She is her younger sister.”(Volmes)

"!!"(Readheads)

"We—we are deeply sorry for our actions…"(Redheads)

The four were visibly disturbed, having learnt of Plausha's circumstances. The four, now visibly depressed, were ordered to reflect on their actions while Volmes escorted Plausha back to her room.

"I am sorry, it happened due to my lack of supervision. I promise you that this will never happen again."(Volmes)

"N-it's nothing."(Plausha)

After apologizing to Plausha, Volmes talked to her about the circumstances of those guys for a little while. They too have lost their close friends all at once. They had not been able to mourn their friends due to all the bustle with military reorganization. When the bustle had seemed to settle down, the [Water Mirror] incident happened and the situation got worse as the turmoil spread again. Plausha was able to relate with this situation as she had seen the unrest in the city.

"I am sorry for requesting the impossible from you…"(Volmes)

"I.. I will do my best!"(Plausha)

As Volmes said that [Water Mirror's] influence was approaching threatening strength, Plausha hardened her resolve to complete her mission. She would carry out her mission to search for [Water Mirror] from tomorrow.

"Take a rest today."(Volmes)

After saying that Volmes left Plausha's room.

***

As various recreational facilities were installed below the lodgings, barracks also had recreational facilities and bar built in the underground section. After leaving Plausha's room, Volmes headed towards the resting room. The four guys from before were drinking there.

"Captain, did you really have to hit us so seriously there?"(Redhead A)

"It looked more convincing that way."(Volmes)

"Did we really had to go so far with that act?"(Redhead B)

"You had to precisely because it was an act. The bait had to look real in order to get the most out of it."(Volmes)

Volmes replied to a playful complaint of one of the guys and flattered him, "The act looked to be pretty real." His subordinates also laughed, remembering Plausha's face.

(TN) there was no paragraph separator here so I assume that the same discussion with the 4 guys is continuing. In manga it was a short dialogue between Volmes and Izapnar)

“Now I expect that girl to start carrying out her mission. If she manages to lure him out into our territory, we can let a specialist handle the rest.”(Volmes)

“So, you already have someone in mind?”(Redhead A)

“I plan to use Belushya from the water troupe.”(Volmes)

“Oh that ice woman?”(Redhead A)

Water troupe, similar to water god corps, was a group focused on healing type divine arts, however if it had to be said, they were more of a militia than a support group.

The members of the elite group were split almost evenly between the support types and the offence types. Belushya was a top class divine arts user of this elite group. Drinking a glass of alcohol that was offered to him, Volmes turned to leave to proceed with his other tasks.

“Don’t forget to keep up your act. If you meet her you have to look depressed.”(Volmes)

“Yeaaah, yeah.(Redheads)

Volmes left the resting room, listening to their halfhearted reply.

Chapter 24: Deernook fortress

Sorry for another long break guys, i hope you did not start hating me for that, but, as an apology, i brought some good news for you this time. From today onward we are back on a release/3 days schedule. Thus this chapter catches up with the manga and the next one will go past it. Enjoy!

***

As the harvest festival came to an end, Zeshald was thoroughly basking in attention that the sacred treasure that was supposedly bestowed by the queen has drawn to him.

Since the announcement about the formation of the [Water Mirror] on the first day of Zalnar's month of fire, Zeshald has been working almost without breaks. Because of their position, some members of elite troupes secretly came to visit him under the shroud of night to express their interest to become a member. Thus, he had to handle the visitors regardless of if it was day or night.

Still, the divine arts aura that Zeshald had around him emitted the power of the sacred treasure. The artifact also calmed him down as well as sped up the body recovery processes thus Zeshald felt part of the power of the item with his own body.

Although, these effects were beyond what Zeshald had expected of the artifact, the old man used them as part of his propaganda which, little by little, spread between the members of the [Water Mirror] and the common folk alike. This envy and awe was a good tool to boost the queen's influence.

"Hmm, so the construction of the Deernook fortress had started anew."(Zeshald)

"It seems that Yuusuke-kun is also on the move."(Reifold)

"Is that so…We have created quite an organization on this side. Izapnar's faction looks to be slowly preparing for something."(Zeshald)

"They are acting faster than I anticipated. It has to be due to the effect of the festival…"(Reifold)

Reifold, bearing the latest reports from Fonclanc has received Zeshald's report and headed towards the Shalnar temple where queen Rishause was residing.

By communicating between former royalists and working as a messenger for the queen, Reifold was also actively contributing to the queen's faction's rise to power.

"Hmm, it looks like it is going to rain tomorrow," whispered Zeshald, looking out through the window, towards the direction of Fonclanc.

***

~Sanc Adiet, Volance palace~

In the parking area on the first floor of the palace, knight's corps carriages were lined up and ready for departure. Near the line of these carriages stood two men, one wearing a black palace knight's uniform, another wearing a red one.

These men were the commander of the darkness corps, Yuusuke, and a member of the fire corps, Hivodir. This time around, as a special case, Hivodir was given the position of a squad commander. Although the actual reason for his selection was of course related to his position as princess's Violet's fiancé candidate.

Should Yuusuke obtain yet another achievement this time around, he would be able to rise to a social position that would allow him to stand beside the princess as a fiancé candidate. Wary of this, the fiancé candidates raised their voices of concern during one of their meetings, calling out for one of them to also participate in this mission. Sadly, there were no volunteers.

Although the palace knights were powerful divine arts users and held the social position of the elites, the truth was that, aside from the mock combat drills, they had no real fighting experience.

As the place that they would be dispatched was near the country border and would likely become the front of the battle, it was not strange for them to be hesitant. As the heavy silence descended on the meeting room, Hivodir volunteered, saying "In that case, would you let me go?"

"I didn't expect you to actually tag along with us."(Yuusuke)

"Hnhnn, I am also her highness's fiancé candidate. I thought I should get myself distinguished in service."

"I hope that nothing will actually happen."(Yuusuke)

"Hahaha. It would be nice if there were just enough enemies to earn my achievement. I don't care about anything else after that."(Hivodir)

After exchanging this cheerful conversation, the two guys boarded their respective carriages. The darkness god corps left the parking area first, accompanied by the knights that were put under Yuusuke's command for the duration of this mission. In total Yuusuke's group was comprised of twenty people. Hivodir's group, comprised of thirty members as it was accompanied by servants and other personnel, left the parking area after Yuusuke.

Ten carriages, traveling separately towards the Deernook fortress, were seen off by a lot of people as they were leaving the city later than the garrison forces.

***

A wind user scout detachment of Blue Garden, stationed near the country border at the side of the highway to Paula reported that Fonclanc is amassing troops near the state border and constructing some kind of fortification. A large amount of raw material was also seen to have been moved in. After making their report, the scouts were observing the site since a few days ago.

As this information was provided by the scouts in the enemy territory, it seemed that a plan to construct of a new fortress with a garrison of soldiers was underway.

"Another new group has arrived, right?"(Scout)

"Ah, are those guys seriously thinking about an invasion!"(Scout leader)

Commanding officer was inspecting the mass of Fonclanc troops through a telescope. He unintentionally raised his voice towards his subordinate as he was surveying the newly arrived troops who were getting off their carriages.

"That guy! That black guy, isn't that the darkness corps?" (Scout leader)

"That guy is the hero of Gearhawk?!"(Scout)

His subordinate, who was near his captain, confirmed Yuusuke through a similar telescope. Since they were sure that they have not made a mistake, they called for the communications officer to relay this information to Paula headquarters. As the fire god corps members, the royal guards of Fonclanc, were also present, something big was obviously happening there.

"There are rumors that this guy has a special divine art that allows him to build a huge tower out over one day."(Scout Leader)

"I have heard a number of rumors about that myself. Some of them mentioned a monstrous power that raised a tower in a blink of an eye."(Scout)

The rumors of Yuusuke's tower had also reached the Blue Garden, although the "raised instantly" part was treated as an exaggeration or a figure of speech. It was thought to describe a composition of a new construction skill and a special type of divine art to perform rapid construction.

While his subordinate was talking to the communications officer, the scout leader was continuing to monitor the Fonclanc encampment to which the hero of Gearhawk had just arrived. He stared in disbelief as the tents were suddenly folded one by one.

["Are they relocating? They can't be marching forward like this, can they?,"] thought the scout leader, as he wondered if the arrival of the hero was a trigger for something.

"What?!"(Scout leader)

"Are there any new movements, sir?"(Scout)

Telling the communications officer to wait, the scout used his telescope, which was installed near his leader, and tilted his head in a similar way. All of the tents have been removed and the area was vacated. A person, clad in black clothes, stood alone in the field, his hands stretched forward as the ground started to shine, enveloped by a mysterious phenomenon.

"What the hell are they doing there?"(Scout)

"I don't know…"(Scout leader)

The communications officer crouched behind the two whispering scouts as he narrowed his eyes to be able to see the shadows of the people in the distance.

***

"Good, I like how the basement part feels now."(Yuusuke)

"Are you going to build the fortress on top of this? I have no idea how your divine arts

work at all.”(Hivodir?)

“Leave me alone!”(Yuusuke)

“By the way, have you created some proper commander quarters?”(Hivodir?)

Yuusuke firstly created the passages and rooms for the basement that would serve as the foundation of the fortress. Soldiers were awed by the sight as they stared into the vast underground portion of the fortress, appearing before them. Those that have seen the construction of the observation tower in the plaza trembled, waiting for the construction of the actual fortress.

“Okay, I am going to put the upper part. Just in case, everyone please stand back.”(Yuusuke)

By referencing the design of the Gearhawk fortress in the map item data window of his customization menu Yuusuke performed the final checks in the menu for the construction of the Deernook fortress.

“Execute!”(Yuusuke)

Above the fortress foundation a huge wall stretched into the sky, enveloped by light effects. Simultaneously, the raw materials in the area got enveloped by the same light, and disappeared. Before long the light effects vanished and a huge fortress stood before the army in all its glory.

The hundred and twenty knights and service personnel who were sent to be stationed at the Deernook fortress cheered loudly, witnessing the appearance of their new “home”.

***

“What the heck?!”(Scout leader)

The scout leader shouted that as he stood up by pure reflex after witnessing such a sight. Forget about the telescope, he could confirm it with naked eye, the fortress was clearly there.

“So… it was not… just a rumor?”(Scout leader)

“Le-leader! Please look at that, more buildings have appeared.”(Scout)

They were able to see the front right corner of the fortress from their vantage point. Just like how the fortress appeared, many walls of light sprang up in succession around the fortress. Some of them seemed to have become stables, while the others turned into some other sort of facilities.

Finally a stone lookout tower rose above the fortress and the entire area was enveloped with a defensive ditch, and with that the mysterious phenomenon has ended. The Fonclanc knights, who were in within the premises have once again sprung back to work.

“Th-they managed to build one huge fortress…”(Scout)

“Give me a break…”(Scout leader)

The scout leader started sweating he became aware that he was standing in the open, defenseless, and hurriedly hid himself in between a rock formation. However he was still feeling uneasy as if the fortress itself stared through the rocks right at him. He would have surely felt reassured if such a fortress had belonged to his allies.

The fortress that could only be built over six to twelve months at the fastest pace, was raised in an instant. But, since it was built on the enemy side, there was nothing to be exhilarated about.

“Inform the headquarters of this immediately. We will be continuing our surveillance over here.”(Scout leader)

“Roger!”(Comm Officer)

“Oh, looks like a drawbridge has just appeared.”(Scout)

Leaving the relay of the intel to the communications officer, the two scouts have resumed their surveillance duty. The sky that was clear until yesterday has begun to darken with gray rainclouds which were starting to conquer the blue expanse.

***

Having built the fortress and its facilities, Yuusuke was slacking outside while the preparation of the fortress interior was underway. After leading the horses into the stables and parking the carriages in the sheds, Hivodir, for some reason, climbed up the watchtower and was overlooking their surroundings. The tower had no other purpose other than observation.

Members of the darkness god corps began gathering around Yuusuke. Since Hivodir has been around Yuusuke for a while, they seemed to have trouble approaching their captain.

“Thank you very much, captain.”(Vermeer)

“I haven’t seen captain’s power’s for some time. They are too strong after all.”(Shaheed)

“Truly, no matter how you look at it.”(Fonke)

“It is truly great that you are our ally, captain.”(Aisha)

Everyone gave Yuusuke their thanks. As Yuusuke was embarrassed from all the flattery Isotta suddenly gasped as she had noticed something, and a troubled expression has appeared on her face.

“Hmm, what happened, Isotta?”(Yuusuke)

“Ah… No it’s just that… since some time ago someone has been continuously spying on us.”(Isotta)

“It’s those Blue Garden scum. They probably have a surveillance post nearby.”(Fonke?)

Isotta felt the presence of the enemy, which was not a surprise, given the proximity to the state border, thus there was no tension in Fonke's reply. Isotta was only surprised that the feeling she felt was not the usual wind arts surveillance but the feeling that [someone was watching her].

"Hmm…"(Yuusuke)

"Even if that is true, I think we are safe inside of the fortress."(Vermeer)

"If you like it, you can share a room with the captain."(Fonke)

"Eh? Th-this kind of thing!…It-it's rude… Y-you c-can't do that!"(Isotta)

Isotta stuttered, startled by Fonke's teasing, while Yuusuke was inspecting his surroundings, thinking about whether he could create some additional useful improvements.

Chapter 25: White Shadow

"Neri! Neri!"

The construction of the great wall was rushed and because of that, a part of the foundation which was not yet reinforced had collapsed during the rain. Thus, there were several innocent people who got involved in the accident.

~ Plau! Is that you?

"Sis, Neri is! Neri is!"

On the actual scene of the incident, workers of the construction project and injured people who were trapped under the collapsed wall were all currently being rescued. Fortunately there weren’t any dead yet.

~~ Dammed it's useless, this is impossible unless one is skilled in water arts.

"Why didn't you save Neri? Quickly, get a water Doctor here."

~ To call a doctor for an [Artless] pet, it's something which bends the rules.

"Neri is family person! Family's friend person!"

~~Plau.....we have no choice, Neri is an [Artless]

~~It would be better to let him rest sooner.

~~Missy is such a poor thing, it can't be helped as she is a [Artless]

~~Plau is a good kid right? So please bid farewell to Neri here, alright?

"Neri....."

As the rain poured down and battered on the walls, an [Artless] was trapped under the rubbles of the accident. The blood of the person who she had spent all her time with, Neri's blood could be seen, as though her life was flowing away together along with the blood, the young girl was lost at what she could do and was just staring while crying.

".....Ng"

Within the walls, inside a room of the fortress, the sound of the rain battering the cobblestone could be faintly heard. Listlessly lying down and getting up, a sorrowful dream a memory that she had embraced. Plausha awoke from her bed with a single stretch.

"Today, I have to go over to where the Head Instructor is ....."

After washing up, she put on her water troupe uniform while biting a piece of bun and dried fruit in her mouth. She then left her room within the barracks compartment.

Near the borders of Fonclanc and Blue Garden, it's been the 4th day since the

appearance of Deernook Fortress. The heavy rain from the previous day had caused the dried earth of Kaltcio to moisten. This was a blessing to Paula, who is currently experiencing a severe water shortage.

The rain continued pouring on for 3 days, and yet again, the wind arts corps are monitoring the shadows that are on the walls of the fortress as it was their scouting mission. Due to the massive appearance of Deernook Fortress, the soldiers who had nothing to do had gathered together in the recreational area where Yuusuke had made a game to pass the time.

The outside of the turntable was red, green, yellow, green, black, white mass. The idea was to let the ball go into ditches in the surrounding area.The ball would be dropped on the spinning round turntable, and the ball would roll downwards due to it's mass and momentum. Numbers of magnification is written on the side of the table, and the player has to choose the expected color in which the ball will drop in the ditches by placing their bets. The name of the game is [Kaltcio.Roulette]

"Yesss! Double Red came!"

"Ahhh~~~~~~~ just one more and ~~~!"

Unlike the usual gambling bills that they played, this was a higher form of gambling. It became a very popular game as the soldiers were currently starving of entertainment.

"After I created the Pachinko, everyone got confusedly hooked onto it....I didn't knew it would turn out like this."(Yuusuke)

"Captain, is this okay? This...."(Aisha)

Aisha who unreservedly questioned about the current gambling game as she raised her eyebrows wryly. Yuusuke replied with "It should be okay unless they take it too far", while preaching the need for a relief. Incidentally, the highest in command within this fortress is Yuusuke who is the captain of the Royal Knights, while the 2nd in command is Hivodir, the team commander for the god corps.

And that 2nd in command is currently standing in front of the roulette table. He was standing there, promising a treat to his underlings while borrowing gambling bills from them, though most likely he wouldn't keep his promise.

"So close! Let's start the next round, I'll win everything back."(Reifold)

"Commander, that's the 3rd round already right?"

And that’s how Deernook Fortress/became a gambling den.

Within the fortress of Paula, an empty room that was lined up with the great wall was renovated into the [Water Mirror HQ]. Zeshald, with the organization, was currently endeavoring to slowly integrate the system of Cofta, which the reigning Queen used, into the activities of Paula.

He started by overturning the plain and simple daily common sense of Paula. In order to confirm whether there was any visible changes, he made use of the [Artless]

activities. In the alleys of Paula, where large gatherings of [Artless] hung out, most of them had been converted into the Queen's property and were wearing bracelets marking them as slaves.

Those who are the Queen's property were dressed neatly and proper meals were given to them. They are also not allowed to cause unneeded violence.

In terms of sex, one should not force another without the consent of the other. A compulsory medical examination must be conducted accurately by the use of water arts, and most importantly, [Artless] should all be treated equally as though they are dealing with a normal person.

Although at the beginning there seemed to be confusion from both sides, the assignment became much smoother after an elderly who came from Cofta stepped up..

"It'll soon be noon, Plausha will you go out for lunch too?"(Zeshald)

"Ah, yes"(Plausha)

Within the Water Mirror HQ, there was a group of alternation escort officers from the God Militia around Zeshald, as they were here to keep a lookout of any wary assassination attempts towards Zeshald. Amongst them, Plausha held a very special position and was relatively close to him.

Plausha was a collection from the water troupe provisional members, she was recruited during the restructuring of the forces whereby talented personnel were being secured from the god militias.

Originally, she as Zeshald's disciple wanted to joined the water troupe. As she was once a provisional member of the elite team, her being around Zeshald didn't seem to be unnatural or uncomfortable in anyway, thus there wasn't any suspicion of her being a spy from Izapnar's camp.

While having lunch in the HQ simple and long table, Plausha was nervous as she was wondering what kind of information she should report to Izapnar. For the past few days, in spite of being in the vicinity of Zeshald, nothing serious was being talked about and she only heard some silly jokes.

Due to being busy with activities from the organization, she could not ask for divine arts guidance, and it would seem unnatural if she were to inquire about the different things of the organization. At this rate, she was getting impatient by the topic of tomorrow’s weather and the passing of time.

"Ahh.....just as I thought, I am not suitable for this."(Plausha)

"What's wrong?"(Zeshald)

Plausha was sighing as she had nothing to do. That made Zeshald worried about her and he asked Plausha if there was something wrong.

"Er, erm.... I heard that a fortress had suddenly been built at the border."(Plausha)

"Hmmm, it's about Deer North Fortress right? There is no need to worry about them coming over and attacking for the time being though."(Zeshald)

"So it's like that? Oh.....but, I heard that the Darkness God Corps are stationed at that Fortress...."(Plausha)

"What, even if that guy likes to fight, he will not move unless something happens. Wouldn't it be better if everyone kept quiet?"(Zeshald)

Zeshald was chewing on his vegetables while speaking about it. After hearing the Hero of Gearhawk being mentioned, Plausha began to suffer from the complicated feelings she had, but she buried them deep into her sea of thoughts in order for Zeshald to not to become aware of her unnatural behavior from his words.

The Water Mirror members who were attached closely to Zeshald were not very suspicious about Plausha, although she had said to be a provisional member of the elite team, they still identify her as an immature girl. As Plausha is a strengthening type water arts user, she doesn't seem to have any attacks to be of threat.

However, Zeshald on the other hand was informed by Reifold who had informed him that Plausha was a spy planted by Izapnar to extract information from him. There was a hidden message within the previous sentence "the darkness corps will not move unless something happens" .

"That said, I don't think that Izapnar will step down quietly without giving a fight."

Today yet again, those who caught glimpses of the current Queen’s entourage who was once the divine instructor and his disciple having a meal, felt like a harmonious scene of a grandpa and his granddaughter. But in fact, under the surface of the seemingly calm water, a quiet battle of authority and symbolism was being waged.

"It seems that the heavy rain is beginning to calm down."(Yuusuke)

"Ah, Captain Yuusuke"

The heavy rain that has been pouring for the past 3 days have becoame a drizzle, the sky which was covered by grey clouds that seemed like white clouds of fog have began to scatter. On the roof of the fortress overlooking the surroundings, Yuusuke was called out by one of the soldiers who was standing guard, he then began to raise a box-like object over the edge of the stone wall.

"What's that?"(Soldier)

"A kind of Telescope for looking out"(Yuusuke)

By combining and customizing the bed frame with the floor of the roof passage, he made a telescope installation. It was a Kepler Telescope, which had an expected magnification of about 30 times. By adjusting the focus and stabilizing the frame, he was able to observe the water catchment that had form which surrounded the fortress.

(TL notes : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Kepler)

"Ng?"(Yuusuke)

"What's wrong?"(soldier)

"....here, take a look"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke fixed the angle and the direction of the telescope and asked the soldier to look into it. He pointed towards the rock which was there earlier and it seemed to have moved.

".....Captain, the Gear Hawk Fortress Hero is waving his hands....! He~ He is pointing his finger at us"

"No way, Did he really noticed us....? Let's move away from here!"

The wind arts corps who were hiding behind the rocks' shadow and monitoring the fortress, began hastily shifting their location. As it was raining, the ground was very muddy thus the wind art scouts began their wary search for any nearby enemies.

"But... How did he found out where we were lurking around?"

"The opponent on the other side must have used something to spot us, maybe a telescope of some sort."

"That's impossible...there is still quite some distance between us."

The captain of the wind arts scouts who was hiding behind another rock began to grumble as they were being spotted, and his subordinates might have just been right on target by saying that. Coincidentally, for this mission they were all carrying telescopes of 4x to 6x magnification .

"Hmm it seems like those are the wind arts militia from Blue Garden. Oh and they are apparently hiding behind the rock shadows."

"It seems that they do not have the technology to monitor us from this distance clearly, as they are searching for an enemy."(Yuusuke)

"Hah! I understand that. Even so.....this telescope have such an amazing performance."

Using Yuusuke's telescope the soldiers stationed atop of the fortress have been tracking the movement of the wind arts scouts without difficulty and were all amazed by the performance of it. It was the first time that they had seen this telescope which could overwhelm the distance of the ones used by the reconnaissance commanders.

"Now then, I just need to make another 5~6 of these"(Yuusuke)

Happy with what his telescope could do, Yuusuke began descending the roof passage.

As Yuusuke came down to the first floor, he could hear a voice approaching from around the corner of the stairway.

"Isotta."(Yuusuke)

"YES!?"(Isotta)

Surprised by her name being called, Isotta literally jumped up, causing Yuusuke to become surprised as well.

"There, there. There is no need to be surprised like that."(Yuusuke)

"Ah, eh, oh, Captain....I, I'm sorry."(Isotta)

As he was focused on the task at hand of making a wide range search operation by using the so called "Line of Sight", he was surprised by the sudden moderately tensed voice. The figure of her placing her hands on her chest while slightly blushing with her heart throbbing intensely had caused Yuusuke to realize that she was giving off a quite cute impression.

Up till today, there were several highly powerful divine arts users other than Isotta who tried to attempt a search operation, but it seemed that they couldn't detect the enemy's' presence. As she is able to control and feel the flow of her power, she is able to locate presences from her investigation.

"Could you still feel them?"(Yuusuke)

"Yes, yesterday....during when the rain intensified, I could feel that the quite strong presences were nearby...."(Isotta)

Even now, she could dimly feel the presences despite them being away from the line of sight of the huge plains as the rain drizzled. There were a few presences that were felt closeby.

"Hmmm, what kind of wind presence did you felt when using your wind arts?" (Yuusuke)

"Erm...."(Isotta)

Basically, by using wind arts one could use it to feel the wave of divine arts, by spreading the wind around to pick up these kind of presences. Normally, any divine art users would be able to detect or feel this wave. Although it is not as clear as seeing or hearing directly, it is on a level where it can be felt.

In order to search for enemies, one has to induce the wind with their own divine arts, and one is able to sense and identify the information from the subtle trembling in the air due to divine arts. But for the search of the same type of wind arts users, if the person was very sensitive to the wave of divine arts, he could interfere with the search technique that was being used.

Yuusuke wanted to implement a radar type equipment that he had an image of floating in his mind, when he suddenly remembered about Shinha, who was also an [Artless], who didn't have any ounce of divine power and thus the search technique couldn't be applied to locate them. There was one time that Krielov had said,"The [Artless] are hard to locate."

"Hey, Isotta are you able to feel the wave of the [Artless]?"(Yuusuke)

"The [Artless] do not have any wave presence of divine arts in them--a Oh! I see this.... is everyone's presence."(Isotta)

After abruptly realizing something, she began to clap both her hands and raised her voice. It was an unusual gesture coming from Isotta in public, and she immediately became aware of her own behavior and looked down to hide her shy face. Yuusuke began to inquire from her what did she understand and knew. She replied while bearing a laughter.

"Uhhh....Erm, I.....grew up around the [Artless]....."(Isotta)

As Isotta was brought up by [Artless] parents, her day to day activities of interaction with them made her realized that they too wore a familiar and distinctive faint wave which she had felt. She didn't notice that she would be able to feel such a distinct wave in such a place, the same kind she had felt while she was in the city, at the [Artless] streets.

"So that means that there are several [Artless] nearby."(Yuusuke)

"Yea.....it seems so, right?"(Isotta)

It seems that they have been trying to get close and move away from the fortress.

"To be this far away from the ranches, what are they doing?"(Yuusuke)

"Well....."(Isotta)

It seemed that the presences that Isotta had felt was from the several [Artless] who were farther away from this place and nearer to the Blue Garden borders. There were many questions as to why these [Artless] were in such a dangerous zone? Both of them became puzzled by the situation.

"Just in case, if anything happens, alert me immediately."(Yuusuke)

"Yes."(Isotta)

Yuusuke was wary about those mysterious presences and the only person on his team who could detect such a presence was Isotta, thus the future surveillance was entrusted to her.

Evening ~~

The starry sky and moon was hidden behind the thin cloud covering, as the moonlight dimly shone upon the lands of Kaltcio, barely escaping the dark night. The rain which lasted until the evening, had formed water puddle-like reservoirs around the vicinity, which were reflecting the swaying moonlight.

In the Oval Office of the council halls in Paula's central HQ, Supreme Leader Officer Izapnar begin discussing the measures with his confidant Volmes, about the organization "Water Mirror", which is under the Queen's direct control, along with the message report from Plausha about Zeshald.

"That Bastard, he seems to keep everything in check"(Izapnar)

"Nevertheless, with this, it seems that she is a spy for our side."(Volmes)

By dangling a bait in front, it is one of Volumes favorite tactic to allure someone.

"But that darkness god corps..... and the report about that fortress, can we trust the information of the wind arts scouts?"(Izapnar)

"As investigated by the wind troupe, there is most certainly a fortress standing there." (Volmes)

From the information that was gathered by the Wind arts Scouts, it seems that a large number of god militias have affiliate themselves with the queen's faction. Also due to being told about the undeniable fact of the presence of a fortress, the quite skeptical and erratic Izapnar was frowning. The Hero of Gearhawk who decimated the main force of his personal army was keeping an eye right at the border.

".....by using the opportunity of the dangling bait in front of his senses, we can make use of Belushya."

Currently, Izapnar is doing a force analysis of the war potential each side holds. Using the reports he carried out different simulations of strategies. The War Potential coming from Fonclanc was estimated to be about 50 troops.

The total number of the forces from the darkness god corps is unknown, reports of it place it at just above 20 members, and there is also the soldier delegation led by the flame god corps, with a combined force of roughly 30 members.

"Right now the ground will be muddy due to the rain, the horse drawn carriages will have a hard time to run, an outfield battle will cause a fall in power for the flame arts and wind arts."

In other words, as long as they hide within that stronghold, even the hero of Gearhawk would not be an upcoming threat. Izapnar came to this conclusion that as the ground have been absorbing too much water, it became a natural barrier.

The current situation of the Water Mirror is that the chosen god militia who are highly loyal to the queen are being sent over to Kofta. As they were to become the direct power to the Queen. Those who remain in Paula now are those who rejected to head over to Kofta and those who are in the middle of the selection, within these groups of people where were some who were trying to get some breathing space.

"There is a possibility of those who would double cross."

"If we were to arrest the head, Zeshald, there will be a mob."

"Hmmm, if we were to act, now is the chance."

"If it is possible, the recovery of the sacred treasure must be carried out confidentially."

The First step is to produce a civil war like play and in the middle of all the confusion, we will use it to attack Zeshald. Even in an event of failure, as long as we can take control of the hideout of the organization it will be sufficient. Within Paula the difference in strength could be clearly seen, as they are an organization whose flag was just raised, it is predicted that they would immediately be destroyed due to their lack of resistance.

"Immediately convey to each and every elite troupe to gather. We begin recruiting for the elimination strategy starting from the training facilities. It does not matter if they are still candidates."(Izapnar)

"Yes, I will do it immediately."(Volmes)

On the 8th day of the fire month of Zalnar, during the twilight period before dawn. The Civil War broke out within the Fortress City of Paula, Blue Garden.

Chapter 26: The Evil God's Roar

Part 1

The Civil war turmoil within the Fortress City of Paula began unnoticed as the majority of the populace was fast asleep. On the second floor passages, within the great walls where the Water Mirror HQ lies, the elites team of Izapnar were poised to launch their raid, which was followed by a battle proceeding the god militia's ambush of the Water Mirror Camp.

Just before the raid was carried out, one member of the elite group, without any regards of any danger, had brought the attack information to the Water Mirror HQ.

"Ah, Mr.Zeshald."

"What's the current situation?"(Zeshald)

In one of the rooms of the Water Mirror HQ, those who were injured in combat were being healed. In the corner of that room, several water arts users were doing their utmost to heal one lady. The young lady who wore a burned uniform of the water troupe, had been burnt around her shoulders. She was the one who brought information about the attack.

"Currently, the passageway is on a offensive and defensive stalemate, the girl has 3rd degree burns and our water arts can't..."

"Hmm, let me try..."(Zeshald)

Zeshald began to exercise his power of healing and the lady's skin started to regenerate instantly. The fact that Zeshald had mastered the healing arts, and on top of that, the effect of the sacred treasure added on, allowed him to display a miracle type of healing not known to the world of water arts in history.

A burnt wound caused by fire arts which would normally take more than 10 days to recover, was instantly healed without leaving a scar.

"AMAZING.....so this is the power of the sacred treasure!"

"Fortunately, had she not informed us about it, there would have been more injured allies."(Zeshald)

The Water Arts personnel rejoiced at the recovery of the lady, and one after another they began to carry the wounded into the room. As she was still unconscious they had left her on the bed. Zeshald began to heal those who had major injuries and at the same time he took over the command as the water mirror's military commander.

Since a while ago, Reifold had ran over towards the Queen Risha's location, thus the current situation was being transmitted immediately.

"Now then.....Yuusuke's reinforcements might not be able to make it in time."

Izapnar chose this day and this timing to attack as a strategy to make the most out of the geographical, force balance and weather advantages against the Water Mirror. Since

the founding declaration of the Water Mirror, Fonclanc had also started to move. As the restructuring of the forces against the foreign enemy have not been completed yet, Izapnar had to use a way to seal and prevent the growing power by restraining the amount of forces the Water Mirror was gathering.

If the water mirror were to continue to have a substantial amount of force flowing to the Queen and if her forces were to stand in line with Izapnar's forces, the difference in terms of authority and the support from the populace within Blue Garden would reverse their positions in power.

In order to prevent that from happening, he had to crush the water mirror no matter the type of method, be it brute force. The Water Mirror had expanded to a threatening size, and Fonclanc's troops were at the border at the same time. Due to the history they had with the Darkness God Corps, who were glaring at them from the border, he was forced into this situation.

The rain, which had continued to pour down for 3 days until yesterday, became a blessing in disguise for Izapnar.

"What's the current situation at the battle front?"(Izapnar)

"All according to plan., Belushya who notified them of the raid is seriously injured and currently protected within the Water Mirror Camp."(Volmes)

"Great, all that is left is to wait for the attack on Zeshald"(Izapnar)

"Just in case of failure, should we press on a little more?"(Volmes)

Izapnar replied "Yeah" to the proposal Volmes made. They continued their advance in order for the Civil War play to not fail in it's deception. At the same time, they had to eliminate all of the Queen's forces that were here in Paula, as they didn't have anywhere else to retreat to.

Just now, a scout who was monitoring the fortress on the border had arrived with news about Fonclanc's troops whom were getting to a sortie position. Currently, a part of the great wall is where the battles are occurring, it is also within the distance range whereby immediate reinforcement could reach by rushing with high speed horse drawn carriage. They could reach it in approximately 40 mins.

However, now the ground was in it's worst condition and the visibility during the dark night is bad. No matter how many wind arts were used as assistance, the wheels of the horse drawn carriage kept sinking into the mud under the weight of the many soldiers it was transporting, thus the speed wasn't very satisfactory.

Even if they had managed to travel at the normal speed, it would be around sunrise when they arrived at the vicinity of the Great Wall. By that time, everything would have been settled. For the time being, everything is going according to plan.

"Fufufun, It will be very interesting if I returned Zeshald's corpse in reply for Gearhawk Fortress."

Opportunities is what you create for yourself, Izapnar was convinced in this saying.

(TL note: I wonder if I should use Sun Tzu quote instead:" The opportunity to secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself")

"Captain! Please Wake Up, Captain Yuusuke!"

"O waa? What What!"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke who had been working late all night and didn't lay down until a little while ago was awakened by the Aisha who rushed breathless into his room.

"A Civil War in Paula! Zeshald's Water Mirror and the elite troupes of Izapnar had just entered a state of war!"(Aisha)

"!!! They had finally made their move."(Yuusuke)

Just as the Deernook Fortress began to fall asleep, due to the sudden change all the soldiers began to run around and the overall tension gradually increased . Yuusuke immediately took his change of clothes and began to change into his squad's uniform which was prepared before hand for a sortie. His hard work had paid off, up til now he had been working until midnight on the new equipment that was meant for the horse-drawn carriage.

The moment Yuusuke arrived at the base floor of the fortress, the carriages which were fully prepared by the workers who were swarming the area were all ready to go. The soldiers were also all lined up and ready for the sortie. Hivodir clad in his flame corps uniform spearheaded the leading and instructing of the soldiers.

"You have finally come, Yuusuke, at last we can depart! Now, give the soldiers an awe inspiring speech."(Hivodir)

"I'll pass. Fonke, are the carriages ready to go?"(Yuusuke)

"Please wait awhile, just another 2 more units."(Fonke)

While watching the retrofitting of the special modification to the soldier's carriages, those whose carriages were already done with the preparation had began to move. The special modification to these carriages, which enabled them to output a decent speed even if the ground was muddy, was the attachment of sled plates in place of the wheels. Yuusuke had been working til late at night because of these plates.

"Please wait a moment Yuusuke! Shouldn't there be a speech before departure? Also, this is my first battle!"(Hivodir)(TL notes: seems like hivodir really wants a speech)

"Well, then I shall leave that to you."(Yuusuke)

"What? Okay, leave it to me."(Hivodir)

"Make it brief."(Yuusuke)

With Hivodir's speech as an BGM, the sortie preparations of Deernook Fortress were done and they began to depart. The clear sky after the rain was sparkling full of stars,

the smell of the wet soil and humid winds was stroking on the cheeks and hair along the jet-black cloak. Yuusuke who was finally awake from the sleepiness, took in a deep breath.

"The Preparations for the sortie have been finalized! We can depart anytime!"(Fonke)

"Yosh... let's move out!"(Yuusuke)

The Darkness corps and Fonclanc's military soldiers led by Yuusuke numbered a total of 50, their mission was to depart from the Deernook fortress and reach the Great Wall of Paula.

~The Civil War broke out in Paula.~

The battle between the Water Mirror god militias and Izapnar's elites troopers have been going on for about one hour.

"Emergency Report! A Convoy of Fonclanc's Military is approaching us!"

"WHAT! Have you checked it properly!"

Due to the sudden news of Fonclanc's approaching Izapnar army, he unintentionally let out a panicked voice,as it was far too early even for a immediate sortie to arrive after the start of the attack. Volmes began to issue commands for defense troops which were scheduled to be relocated towards the direction in which the attackers were approaching from.

"How in the world....no, it must be that strange divine arts of the darkness corps which could build a fortress in an instant."(Izapnar)

He began grinding his teeth due to the miscalculation of not applying common sense to the plan. But he still had the location advantage. The Great Wall of Paula is a barrier comparable to a 4 story building. It would not be an easy task to counterattack and capture from within the Great Wall.

"You have arrived, Volmes."(Izpanar)

"Apparently, Fonclanc's military have arrived a little too soon."(Volmes)

"Ah, but if they could not enter the Great wall, all will be well."(Izapnar)

As long as the battle with the Water Mirror rages on within the Great Walls. The fact that you can't help from the outside is unchangeable.

"A defense force have been placed to intercept them and to prevent them from approaching the Great Wall."(Volmes)

The moment they had a visual on the Great Wall, Yuusuke's group began to spread out. Immediately, the confirmation of multiple enemies from Blue Garden had been sighted.

"As I thought, the foothold is inferior."

"Captain, it seems that a squad of troopers have appeared from the Great Wall's top pavement."

"Are they the intercepting troopers?"

"Probably not, they seem to be using divine arts which specialize in bows."

One after another the soldiers got off at designated position and awaited for further command from Captain Yuusuke. Using the cover of darkness, the tension from the large force have started to loosen from Yuusuke, as he began to do a hand signal of advancement for the whole force.

The ranged defense troops whom were placed on the pavement of the Great Wall at the very last minute were all on alert. Attempts to contact Zeshald, who is currently commanding the Water Mirror army, through wind arts were all being blocked by a strong wind arts interference.

"It seems like there are occasional light from that small window on the great wall....most likely, that is the place where the battle is occurring."(Vermeer)

"It's not good to jump in unprepared, have the materials arrived?"(Yuusuke)

"It had just arrived, it is pretty heavy and couldn't really move very fast."

The stones that were used for the cornerstone construction of the fortress were all fully loaded into 3 carriages and had just arrived at the scene a little later than the soldier's carriages. Fonke who was entrusted with the command of transportation came over to report.

"Yosh, Let's Begin."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke stared towards the opening which Vermeer spoke of as he opened up his customization menu and selected the stones from the wagon.

He use the technique which he send down the stones from the skies at Gearhawk Fortress. Using it he created a row of connecting square stones which allowed him to customize the "Fortress City Paula" as a group items directly from a distance.

The Great Wall of the fortress city is divided into several layers, the moment the corner stone was connected to the wall the tempering began.

On the pavement of the Great Wall above, there were Blue Garden defense troopers who were in position to guard against Fonclanc's army. On the place where Fonclanc's troops had gathered earlier on, beams of lights could be seen near the lower part of the Great Wall, where it seemed to come from a elongated stone pillar.

Volmes, who is currently taking command of the defense forces had read reports about the weird divine arts which the Hero of Gearhawk used, the divine arts would have a phenomenon of "pre-emitting lights", thus he judged that it was clearly a gimmick of something, thus he began ordering his subordinates to destroy the stone pillar below.

"What's up, quickly destroy it."(Volmes)

"Er, erm...."

"The fireball doesn't seem to have any effect on it!"

"Same results for the water lance!"

"The wind blades too!"

They tried using lumps of stones created by the earth arts and dropping on it, but contrary to its looks of being long and narrow, it was as strong as a large stone pillar.

"Shit....., what the hell is it made out of?"

Just as the calm Volmes have started to feel impatient ~~

"..... OH NO! EVERYONE RETREAT!"(Volmes)

Including the location of the Great Wall where they just stood, the whole area began emitting light over a wide radius.

A downward draft wind from Bouzas mountain blew onto the Great wall. When the Great Wall was built, it had blocked the wind coming down from Bouzas mountain. For a long time, the earth facing the Great wall that had wished upon the caressing of the wind, bathing in it for more than a dozen years.

For the first time, the earth on the opposite side was bathed in wind.

"WAAAA, WHAT THE HELL IS THIS!"

"What happened! Is it an enemy trap?"

A part of the great wall spanning about 100m on the left to the right disappeared, the internal of the structure became exposed from the side in full view. The pillars, floor and ceiling didn't collapse under it's weight as it had been further reinforced.

The Water Mirror troops and Izapnar's elite troupe who were currently in the ongoing battle in the passageway were all suddenly thrown into a stage theater. The troops from both sides, who were under confrontation, were taken aback by the event when they saw Fonclanc's army.

"Mwahahaha! This is interesting!"(Fonke)

"Fonke! Stop it with that sinister laughter in the middle of the battle, it's imprudence."

Due to the current event, the whole army stopped their movements, only members of the Darkness God Corps were showing some actions.

"Erm, Full Force attack!?"(Yuusuke)

Because everyone seemed stunned, Yuusuke took the opportunity and ordered an attack. The Fonclanc army immediately headed towards the elite troops from Blue Garden who were inside the Great Wall, the first blow was sent out by Shaheed.

"OUCH! Argh, aaa~~~....~~"

Enhanced by the Darkness God corp's sword, the water ball which was amplified hit one of the opposing elite troupe members as he was dropped to the ground. In order to return that blow, the elite troupe scattered and hid behind the nearby obstacles and pillars, while attacking from the side.

"Captain, make a declaration as the Water Mirror reinforcements."(Isotta?)

"Oh, alright. Isotta, please use your voice."(Yuusuke)

"Yes."(Isotta)

Using her wind arts skill she secretly transmit it to a certain target, this skill allow her to amplify a voice wave extensively by using the surrounding area's air, this technique is called "Hiroden". Using Isotta's skill to amplify, Yuusuke's voice resounded around the area where it had become a battlefield.

"~~~ Ehh, This is the Darkness God Corps Captain Yuusuke, I come from Fonclanc. We are here to cover the Water Mirror's Army, Best Regards.~~"(Yuusuke)

In that moment, the whole battlefield when silent.

"A~....Captain, should you say that now?"

"Yuusuke! No matter how tempting you shouldn't be using [Hiroden]!"

"Well, in some sense, it's so captain-like."(Shaheed)

Vermeer made a confirmation as he wiped of his overflowing sweat. "Why aren't there any introductions to my squad?" Hivodir pointed it out as he protested. Shaheed began to show understanding of the "Yuusuke-like" actions, Fonke wouldn't stop laughing, while Aisha took an alert stance.

"There is no helping it, I have no experience and never took drama lessons before." (Yuusuke)

Rather than that, he took the enemy by surprise as their movements have stopped after [Hiroden], Yuusuke sure is defiant. Though it seems that it also stopped the allies' movement.

"In any case, we came from Fonclanc to dabble in the leadership of Paula and to cover the Water Mirror Army! Attack the enemies!"(Yuusuke)

"Roger that! Everyone attack the enemies!"

Yuusuke reissued his attack command. The one he had always rehearsed was finally put into practice. Due to the distance, most of the people from the Fonclanc army couldn't deal killing blows, but in the drafty passage in front of the elite troops were the Water Mirror army whom they were currently confronting, thus it became cumbersome and absurd to attack.

"Damn it....where are the reinforcements! What happened to the suppression, at this rate we will all be eliminated."

"No this place is no good! Let's retreat to where there is a wall!"

The elite troupe began to retreat just in time before the Water Mirror troops pushed up front and chased them within the passage. While Fonclanc's army sniped the elite troupe from far, in order to cut down the enemies' strength.

It became a shooting game with Divine arts due to the poor visibility as both armies were in the dark, but the elite troupe released a light divine arts to differentiate between allies and enemies. They didn't realize that Fonclanc's army was in the wilderness outside and hidden in darkness, all the while the counterattack for the Water Mirror forces wasn't given.

The defense troops whom finally arrived from the pavement above the Great Wall started to counterattack and intercept the position, but due to the distance their attack were inefficient, those who were hit directly only abstained some injuries.

The Sky on the east gradually began to change from deep blue to purple, notifying the arrival of dawn. While in a winning mood, Isotta felt a dangerous presence approaching the left rear of Fonclanc's army and issued a warning.

It was the same [Artless] presence that she had felt while in Deernook Fortress. Thus the other scouting units became wary and started to use their wind for a searching operation.

"From the left flank a cavalry unit is approaching! No wait...., the direction it's heading is the Great Wall of Paula, I think most likely the combat zone!"

"Even cavalry?"

"I can't feel the divine arts wave....certainly not"

"The cavalry is approaching! They...number 200!"

After hearing the reports of the 200 cavalry approaching, the soldiers began causing a commotion. The entire Fonclanc's army consciously turn towards the direction of the approaching forces, the approaching sound of horse hooves blowing up the muddy earth could be heard. And then ~

"[Artless] Warriors!"

From the darkness cutting through the lights of the horizon, a battle group of [Artless] equipped with swords and bows. The White corps appeared.

Part 2

The white corps that suddenly appeared stopped about 500m south of the Fonclanc's army, away from the chaos. Once there, they began to arrange their ranks in a line. It seemed like they weren't going to be involved in the fight, as half of the horses were being led away.

Even so, a unit consisting of one hundred [Artless] Warriors, were taking up position in line as they glared towards the Great Wall of Paula. But as one looked closely, they could see personnel with red, blue and green hair; those with divine arts amongst them.

"~~~ We are white sword cavalry from Gazzetta. By order of King Shinha, we are here

to assist our king's ally: the Hero of Gearhawk, Yuusuke.~~~"

The use of the wind arts, [Hiroden], from the Gazzetta army resounded through the area. Gazzetta is a nation whereby it's citizens have equal rights, it's lands were made up of mainly mountain ranges, with it's ancient capital guarded by its [Artless] king. There are rumors whereby they have a facility which fosters [Artless] Warriors within their territories.

There was rumors of the participation of Gazzetta's [Artless] Army in the upcoming battle. Confusion spread across Fonclanc's army, Yuusuke felt so depressed to hell like a cameraman's viewfinder, to deal with the situation and calm his feelings he opened up his customization menu screen.

He began organizing each and every piece of information he had, as the other side had said that they were here as an ally. He summarized that Shinha was being called king. As the overall person in charge, Captain Yuusuke used his firmness and calm attitude to assess the situation, and from their declaration it seems that they weren't enemies, thus the confused Fonclanc's army gradually regained their composure.

"Captain, the servants would like to know how the communication with the Water Mirror is coming along?"

"Well, what about it?"

"Even without reinforcements now, the Water Mirror should be able to become the leaders of Paula at this rate."

Although it is said to be allies, the Diplomatic relations with Gazzetta were shallow, and there was uncertainty of whether the [Artless] corps would be participating. In all honesty, they were most likely here to cause confusion. After Yuusuke consulted with his subordinates he replied the Gazzetta Army with [Hiroden].

"~~Thank you for the reinforcement. However, we are not going to have reckless sacrifices. Thus we hope you would stop and line up as a deterrence force.~~"

He issued a request command for the oncoming force to stop advancing. By the way, Hivodir was supervising the dialogues. The response from Gazzetta army goes like this, "We will be in favor as an ally in this battle, but our military command authorities have the goal to release our brethren that are held here."

"....this smells suspicious."

"Ah, they seem like a determined bunch."

"What does that mean?"

According to Vermeer and Shaheed, it seems that Gazzetta is taking the opportunity to invade Blue Garden by joining Fonclanc's armed intervention using the excuse of being Yuusuke's ally. While Yuusuke was listening to both of their opinions, a new [Hiroden] started to echo the surrounding area.

"~~ I am the Queen's immediate organization Water Mirror's leader Zeshald~~"

Now it seems that a [Hiroden] of Zeshald's voice from Water Mirror have been issued,

the nostalgic voice to Yuusuke that came from the Great Wall.

In a dignified and heavy sounding voice, he began to talk about the Queen's policy of Blue Garden [Artless] protection policy and the future where the policies will be heading towards. Due to the small scale of armed conflicts, and the most of the personnels in the walls are civilians, he would appreciate if Gazzetta would stop their invasion.

Zeshald declared that he did not consider the Gazzetta army as a reinforcement of Fonclanc. Zeshald had also arrived at the same conclusion as Vermeer and his gang, and in order to restraint Gazzetta’s Army using the cover plan as Yuusuke's reinforcement, he used [Hiroden] again.

"~~Even with the same reasons of a war of liberation, it doesn't seem like you're on the Blue garden's side~~"

Gazzetta Army rebuked by saying so. Not observing the pretext of the Queen's protection, they declared the release of all fellow countrymen which are owned by the Queen. That itself is clearly a declaration of war. While a three way struggle of [Hiroden] began, the battle became lull.

"Didn't this become a little confusing?"(Yuusuke)

"Captain, it seems like there is a new force approaching from the mountain side of the great wall!"

"Blue garden's reinforcement?"

"No, it seems like.....the Queen's banner"

New troops began to appear from the mountain side of Great Wall, these were the combat troops gather by the queen's force in Kofta to assist in the civil war.

"~~ I am Blue Garden's Queen, Rishause Toole ~~"

The Queen's dignified voice echoed through the battlefield. She approved the Fonclanc's military intervention, while declaring that she will completely resist against Gazzetta's invasion. With the Queen’s personal appearance by using [Hiroden], all the soldiers regardless of affiliation who were in this place were cheering.

At the same time, using the flow, the supreme leader officer Izapnar used his voice and inspired a battle cry.

"~~ Comrades, this must be an invasion conspiracy of Fonclanc and Gazzetta! Attack the Enemies! ~~"

In order to restore the momentum of the Blue Garden's God militia, without including the elite troupe, which had seem to tilted towards her majesty's favor, he tried to steer the attention of the whole army by diverting it using a sense of crisis to the presence of predators. Izapnar is currently using his favorite technique which allows him to move people, thus reaching to the top positions he held today.

"~~Do not attack, stop this battle immediately. Izapnar pull back your soldiers. Prioritize the evacuation of the citizens.~~"

The Water Mirror Militia Forces and Izapnar elite forces were currently in a standoff in the passage, while the Queen's forces move into a position where part of the wall which had disappeared in order to restraint the Gazzetta's army from advancing. The Fonclanc's army was all lined up on the side while looking at the Militia forces and elite forces glaring at each other.

Gazzetta's army which was further south of Fonclanc's army was staring intensively at the Great wall. Their current position was looking at the back of the Water Mirror's forces.

"What is this situation, it became very chaotic."

"......Erm, Yuusuke. Doesn't it seem to have become quite an awkward situation?"

"As you can see, it became a 5 way fight."

"No, it's not that."

"Looking at Gazzetta's movement, to bring their army to such a place, they are most likely trying to publicize their presence around the world," Hivodir said as gave his own analytical speculation. Due to the fact that the other countries are also paying attention to this battle that is happening right here.

The anticipation of Fonclanc and Blue Garden conflict turning into a war, using the basis of pretense, of helping the Hero of Gearhawk and invade Paula to release the [Artless] of Blue Garden. And by causing a large number of deaths to the divine arts users, citizens of Blue Garden, the expected outcome was that the [Artless] from various places would retaliate from their oppression.

In the end, the aim which Gazzetta was seeking was the salvation of the [Artless]. At the same time, it was to increase Gazzetta's national power and so that it's forces will also be enhanced.

"If it continues to go according to this, it would crushed King Esvobus's aim."

Within the narrow remaining walls of the Water Mirror HQ, Zeshald as the commanding officer of the militias was considering the aim of Gazzetta.

If Gazzetta were to be permitted to invade, even if it becomes a one sided battle, Blue Garden's internal dispute will not lessen. And in order to manage the internal conflicts, Fonclanc will be driven to a state of war.

In order to fight against Gazzeta, Blue Garden had to form an alliance with Fonclanc, but the possibility for that was low. Up until now, Fonclanc have been unilaterally suffering from Blue Garden. On the other hand, Blue Garden would be unilaterally suffering the damage if Gazzetta joins the fight.

The Queen was riding on a ruse of Fonclanc's scheme to throw Blue Garden into confusion. Both countries have too many reasons that could cause a strife. While Gazzetta was waiting for the 2 countries to be plunged into the worst situation and take advantage of it.

"King Shinha.....his aim is to overthrow the world using [Artless] and to secure Yuusuke."

In the middle of the Gazzetta Army, surrounded by all his subordinate soldiers, Shinha was carrying out the final confirmation of the strategy with his staff officers for the attack on Paula. It was his long cherished wish to revive the ancient white clan empire of his family, the quiet fighting spirit have began to take his first step onto the battle.

"When this war is over, will the Hero of Gearhawk be regarded as the enemies of divine arts users...."

(Shinha) (most likely talking to himself)

There is also the possibility that Fonclanc, in order to avoid hostility from the other countries, they might take actions to punish the Hero of Gearhawk. In that case, it is also a good way of disposing of him. To embrace death bravely or to struggle with death, in the end only death shall await.

-If he survived and fled to Gazzetta, everything would be good, at that time I will welcome him with my arms wide open.- As Shinha thought about it.

"The preparation for the assault is complete."

"Yosh.....let's begin with the wind art's assistance."(Shinha)

After listening to Hivodir's analysis, Yuusuke began to groan as he then realized the seriousness of the situation. At the same time a report came to him regarding the Gazzetta army, who had started casting their movement assistance wind arts. As it seems, they have finally started to march. From the analysis, Gazzetta excuse for the participation in war would cause Yuusuke to be labeled as a traitor.

Their real purpose was to release the [Artless] who are from the same race, but the problem was that they have declared themselves as an ally of Yuusuke when they entered the battlefield. Yuusuke, had an accomplishment whereby he promulgated a regulation of protection on [Artless] in Sanc Adiet.

"Perhaps, he wanted Yuusuke to be chased by the Divine Arts Users around the world and to seek refuge in Gazzetta."(Hivodir)

"What the hell! Why does he want to make it difficult for Captain!"(Fonke)

"Ther, there is no point in being angry with me."(Hivodir)

"o~mu...."

Hivodir became a target of anger to soothe Fonke who had lost his reasons of restraint, while Yuusuke puzzled over what he should do next. Yuusuke was surprised that Shinha was the King of Gazzetta, but as he currently was in a troublesome situation, there wasn't any spare time to be surprised about it.

"A guy like himself, doesn't seem to be a two faced snake."(Yuusuke)

"Er,erm.....Captain, that person.....I can see him within the ranks."(Isotta)

"EH, Seriously!?"(Yuusuke)

Isotta nodded her head with an uneasy expression, as her green hair swings about.

"~~SHINHA! I know you are inside the ranks, so pull back your forces! We could discuss on how to improve the treatments of [Artless] at another time.~~"

The Queen's forces prepared for the invasion of Gazzetta's army, while the Water Mirror forces and Izapnar elite forces were still in a glare off competition in the passageway. As the tension heightened on the battlefield, Yuusuke once again used [Hiroden] from Fonclanc's troops to Gazzetta's army and echo the cancellation of the assault.

The Commanding officer of the White sword cavalry headed towards Shinha for consultation.

"Hmm.....Don't bother about it, advance." (Shinha)

Shinha lifted up the Large white Platinum colored sword which Yuusuke had repaired previously and issued an advance orders to the lineup towards the Great Wall of Paula.

~In the end, he is the same as the Divine arts users, unable to change.~

Fonclanc's forces could do nothing and watch as Gazzetta’s army began their invasion. If they were to attack Gazzetta's army who declared themselves as an ally, they would cause a huge risk on diplomacy in the future and currently there is no option other than using force to stop them.

"tch... to stand out like that so suddenly, isn't it foul play..."(Fonke)

"That's diplomacy, this is a strategic problem."(Vermeer)

Fonke curse and kicked the wagon, while Vermeer could only look frustratedly at Gazzetta's army. At the same time Shaheed was showing a sullen face towards Yuusuke for further instructions as Yuusuke's [Hiroden] was being ignored.

"Captain, what should we do?"(Shaheed)

"Don't Kid with me.....when did they became my ally."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke began to mumble and grumble to himself, Aisha became worried about him.

"Captain?"

"Diplomacy, Strategies, foul play, common sense.....FINE BRING IT ON!"(Captain)

Yuusuke looked up and ran towards the location of the wagons, as he glared upon the Great Wall to where the Gazzetta's army seemed to be heading towards. The wind,

blowing from Bouzas Mountain, caused his Jet Black mantle to flutter. Every single one of Fonclanc’s forces began to notice Yuusuke roaring at Gazzetta's army, the white sword cavalry.

"I WILL SHOW YOU SOME REAL CHEATS!"(Yuusuke)

Using both his hands, he opened the Customization Menu. Although the customization menu can be operated with one hand, using both hands won't actually double his efficiency, it's just a matter to set the mood. Yuusuke had entered his so-called "Serious Mode".

"Vermeer, gather them around me! Do not let anyone to come through!"(Yuusuke)

"......Roger!"(Vermeer)

Vermeer realized the different atmosphere around Yuusuke and immediately executed his command without reaffirming it. The circumference of the wagon which Yuusuke got onto was being surrounded by the darkness god corps, while the soldiers surrounded it in protection teams.

(TL notes: something like first bound and 2nd bound in defense tactics)

"Hivodir, you will lead a group and encircle the Gazzetta's army. We will inform you the timing from here, your instructions are to restrain them as much as possible until the very last minute.”

"Wah, the difference in numbers is too great.....I understand, I will figure something out."(Hivodir)

Hivodir is a secretly prideful person, but in time of need he is one who would do what needed to be done. Although he was clearly aware of his fear of the overwhelming odds, he consented to the mission without backing out.

"Isotta, inform the Water Mirror using transmission to evacuate with the citizens to the mountain, right now."

"ye-YES!"(Isotta)

Rather than using [Hiroden] she used her normal wind arts transmission to contact the Water Mirror forces. It was how he had predicted, due to the chaotic situation, the wind arts interference was gone. She immediately transmitted the message to the Water Mirror Militia and reported it directly to Zeshald.

"DON'T UNDERESTIMATE GAMERS SHINHA!!!"(Yuusuke)

Using both his hands he operated the customization screen at a very quick pace, a 3D object began to form rapidly.

Meanwhile, inside the HQ of Water Mirror, a shadow figure got up slowly, taking this opportunity to complete her mission~~~~~.

Chapter 27: Miscalculation

Shalnar's month of fire, eleventh day~~

An old clan village hidden in the Gazzetta mountains.

The "village" looked more like a small fortress than a village, and stone buildings were neatly arranged around the environs. At a first glance one could mistake it for a secluded mountain village.

In this small group of buildings, one house set itself apart from the rest, as its disposition was more akin to a shrine than to a simple building.

"Hey granny, still alive and kicking strong, I see." (Young man)

"And look at you, all grown up. You're so tall now." (Village priestess)

The young man was familiar with the village priestess since he was a baby, so after exchanging a friendly chatter the two moved onto the main topic.

"What kind of a revelation have you received this time?" (Young man)

"Mhm… the Evil God has descended." (Village priestess)

"Hmm? Him again, what kind of fellow is It now? An ancient monster or a progenitor of the four great gods (四大神の祖)?" (Young man)

"His body is similar to that of the progenitors. I think he's probably a variation of a man." (Village priestess)

The peaceful atmosphere from before had disappeared as the young man listened carefully to the priestess's revelation.

This descent granted the clan's most desired wish. In ancient times (EN:A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away…), the evil god that descended to Kaltcio had become the source of prosperity for the white clan, although this evil god had also lead their clan to their downfall. This evil god had called himself [Wizard] and had a body of a man (as opposed to that of a beast).

"He has descended in Fonclanc." (Village priestess)

"A human, eh? Then maybe this time he will destroy the prosperity of the divine arts users?" (Young man)

In the world that was controlled by the white clan, those with ability to use strange arts were a minority and they were treated as second rate citizens and mockingly called [colored]. The [colored] worshiped the four great gods who, they believed, had given them their powers. The evil god himself, however, had called that power [magic].

The [colored] had called themselves the [divine arts users] and gradually rose to power. Finally, the white clan was driven off to this region.

"This, I don't know. However, I saw that his hair was jet black." (Village priestess)

“Hmm… I guess there’s no other way… I, myself will go and confirm it.” (Young man)

Another humanoid evil god that had descended before the [Wizard], was a monster clad in human flesh. This monster had culled the [colored] with his power, reducing their numbers to a dwindling minority and providing the white clan with their chance to flourish.

The monster’s statue, enshrined in the shrines of the [artless] all over the world, was based on the shape of this creature.

According to the mission that was passed on to every king of the white clan since the ancient times, when an evil god descended, the king himself would have to go and confirm the existence of the god. Now the evil god has descended, and his image was close to that of the black statue. The young man left the priestess’s shrine and returned to his castle to immediately start the preparations for his journey.

“Do you really have to travel alone?” (King’s aide/concubine)

“I have to, this is a king’s mission.” (Young king)

“But… if something were to happen to the body of your majesty’s…” (King’s aide/concubine)

The king’s aid and concubine objected. The king touched the belly of his worried partner to calm her, as she insisted him to at least take a guard with him,.

“It is too late. Besides, my heir is probably already within you.” (Young king)

“B-but, we don’t even know if the baby is a girl or a boy.” (Kings aide/concubine)

As his lady said that, he calmed her down with a kiss and set out towards the lands of Fonclanc.

***

Zalnar’s month of fire, 2nd day~~

“Impossible. Is that guy really the evil god?” (Young king)

After receiving surveillance reports on the movements of the Blue Garden troops, he decided to invade Paula and ordered the troops to gather up. While the troops were gathering in a town near the country border, a small scout unit was sent towards the ruins of the Gearhawk fortress and the main force was relocated by separating it into smaller groups so as to avoid detection.

“Your majesty, what are you going to do regarding Risha sama?” (Someone close to Shinha and Rishause) (TN: she was called Risha in the webnovel)

“Risha’s father is long dead, she is now but a bird in the cage. We are going to free her together.” (Young king)

The queen had inherited the late king’s dream, even if all she had managed to do was to protect it in the miniature garden that was named Cofta. But even that city would be eventually taken by the supreme commander of Paula. When that happened, the

queen's protection would not be able to extend to the salvation of the [artless].

"Being a queen, she will probably be unable to accept our help" (Someone close to Shinha and Rishause)

"In that case we will free her through sheer force." (Young king)

Carrying his silver greatsword, he advanced towards the queen's army that had taken up a defensive position in front of them. He charged forward, defying the inferior position he currently was at, as the defensive wall stood atop the slight slope on the plains. [Artless] soldiers, who were the descendants of the white clan, were the masters of armed combat. Their charge towards the defendants with weapons prepared in both hands was truly a frightful sight to behold. Faced with it, the divine arts users just barely held their positions with their pride and loyalty of being the queen's army.

"Mrhm, it's regrettable" (Zeshald)

Zeshald climbed up on the wall and was observing the battle from the upper part of the defensive wall. Just as he began to think of whether he should send the divine arts militia, who was coordinating the evacuation of the refugees, to cover the queen's forces, a string of light has stretched from part of the fortress towards the vanguard of the queen's army and a bright light began to envelop the vast area around the fortress.

The next moment only the beads of light remained dancing in the air and at the same time a huge wall appeared separating the queen's army from Gazzetta's forces.

***

Gazzetta's soldier's pace was slightly disrupted by that huge wall, which suddenly separated them from their foes. Shinha looked over his shoulder towards the advancing Fonclanc army as he ordered his army to circle around the wall so as to not halt the advance completely.

"Yuusuke!" (Shinha)

There was quite some distance between Shinha and Yuusuke's darkness god corps. Moreover, the knight corps, led by the fire god corps knights, were in between them. Yuusuke's main guard squad numbered at around twenty soldiers.

If a squad were to branch off from the main force to interfere with the divine arts, they would have a hard time evading the knight squads in the rear and would incur unnecessary losses.

"Read guard, prepare for battle!" (Shinha)

Shinha chose to use a more reliable method and used his triumph card.

["Well, Yuusuke, how will you respond do this?"] (Shinha's thoughts)

***

Yuusuke was looking at the section of the Paula's wall where it had connected to his wall. He had roughly determined the coordinates of the queen's army just by his sight alone and was creating the wall by relying on little more than his intuition.

As he was continuously manipulating the customization menu, a squad member who was monitoring their surroundings and scanning for potential enemies, suddenly informed him about the approaching enemy.

“Gazzetta cavalry is approaching from behind us! They number around forty!” (Yuusuke’s scout)

“That’s bad. Didn’t those guys retreat some time ago?” (Vermeer)

“Captain! You should recall our troops.” (Fonke)

“That is not necessary.” (Yuusuke)

The darkness god corps and knights numbered at around twenty people. Around half of them were well versed in combat type divine arts. If the cavalry that was almost twice as large in numbers were to rush into them, Yuusuke’s group would be trampled and had no chances of winning. Yuusuke turned towards the impatient knight, told him that there was still some distance between them and the enemy, and continued to manipulate the customization menu.

Yuusuke had already anticipated this, so he chose a prearranged customization from the menu and executed it immediately. A stone pavement appeared before the defensive line of his troops.

“Everyone, get on the stone pavement!” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke jumped out of the wagon, screaming the order, and started running himself. Darkness corps members reacted in a heartbeat while the escorting knights followed behind them, as everyone ran towards the pavement. Gazzetta cavalry continued their charge and now was about fifty meters (~55 yards) away from their target.

“Did everyone climb on it? Everyone? Is there anyone still standing on the ground?” (Yuusuke)

After making sure that everyone got up onto the pavement, Yuusuke swiftly opened the customization menu and pushed the execute button.

It was an experimental divine art based on the idea that if the vertical movement of a customized object was possible, then the horizontal movement should be possible as well.

At the moment the fluttering light beads disappeared, darkness god corps and accompanying knights appeared next to the queen’s forces.

***

“Wh-what the heck?!” (Shinha)

Shinha was watching the rear guard forces as he sent an assault force towards the darkness god squad, while his forces were circling around the huge wall. The way that the assault had played out had left him so speechless that he could only raise his voice in surprise. For a moment he thought that the darkness god corps had disappeared, but they suddenly appeared next to the queen’s forces.

“He moved his entire force?!… That’s impossible…” (Shinha)

“Your majesty, if this continues we will be pincered between the queen’s forces, supported by the darkness god squad, and the Fonclanc forces.” (Gazzetta officer)

“I know that myself. Order the cavalry to cover this position.” (Shinha)

The cavalry group was dumbfounded with the sudden loss of their target, as they received a transmission through wind arts to return and back up the main force. Shinha accepted the fact that Yuusuke’s power was greater than he had thought, thus he began changing his strategy, redirecting his army to defend against the attack from behind using the very wall that had foiled their plans.

Contacting the guerilla forces of [artless] in the villages from all over the continent, he ordered them to capture people, close to Yuusuke, under the pretext of protection. Even if they failed to show the might of Gazzetta to the world in this battle, he wanted to at least get some leverage to make Yuusuke come to his country.

“That’s right, there was a girl… named Sun… Communications officer!” (Shinha) (TN: princess peach lol)

***

Yuusuke’s troops had teleported near the main fortress of the queen’s army. As he turned towards the Gazzetta army that should emerge around the corner of the wall at any second, Yuusuke requested the queen’s army to retreat in the direction of the mountain. The queen’s army conceded, saying things like, “Since it’s an order from the evil god corps, we will stand down,” but the militia showed resentment towards the command.

However, Queen Rishause, having heard about the Darkness God corps (Yuusuke) from Zeshald and Reifold, decided that if they really are that strong, it would be better to entrust this battle to them.

According to the queen’s decision, Fonclanc’s army would take over the duty of engaging Gazzetta’s forces. Following this decision, Blue Garden’s forces could honorably retreat from the wall, passing through the fortress and head towards the Bouzas mountain range.

Yuusuke looked up at the fortress, cheerfully smiled, and waved at Zeshald who was looking at him from up there. For a while they stayed like that, glancing at each other.

“The queen’s army is retreating.” (Vermeer) (TN: names in this dialogue are added at random. Will revice as the manga catches up)

“Hivodir’s group has gone around the wall and is pressuring Gazzetta’s army from the flank.” (Isotta)

“The cavalry group had started moving in the rear and is probably attempting to join with Gazzetta’s main force.” (Shaheed)

“Good, prepare to send a signal to Hivodir’s group. Order everyone else to back up the water mirror.” (Yuusuke)

Soldiers were quick to execute Yuusuke's order which he gave in a somewhat calm manner. Yuusuke called out the map item in his customization menu that he had prepared earlier and was waiting for the exact moment to activate it.

On top of having their hands full with the water mirror forces, Izapnar's elite troops were completely surrounded as they now stood not only against the water mirror's force but the queen's army as well, and they also had to face Fonclanc army and Gazzetta invaders. Faced with these circumstances, some of the soldiers on Izapnar's side began ignoring their commander's orders and started surrendering to the queen's forces.

Before long, Gazzetta's army circumvented the huge wall and appeared before the other armies. Yuusuke got lucky, as his enemy appeared in the map item data menu near the wall he created. Because Yuusuke's attacks were of indirect terrain interference type, he needed a customizable map item next to the target that he wanted to attack. Shinha's plan was to back themselves against the wall, thus enabling Yuusuke to do just that.

A wall of light stretched outwards from the Yuusuke's wall and surrounded the White Sword. A considerable amount of stone was required to trap a group of more than a hundred white haired soldiers. Luckily the required resources were available nearby, though the vast wall at the upper part of the main defensive wall of the fortress was continuously disappearing.

"Y-your majesty! That…!" (Gazzetta officer)

"Impossible… did he just confine us within the wall?!" (Shinha)

In the midst of the captured White Sword army, Shinha was late to notice that this nonsensical divine art that had trapped his army also erected similar walls to capture the cavalry group that was moving on their individual orders.

"Grrrrr! He got me… I was wrong to make decisions based on common sense." (Shinha)

Just like that, Gazzetta's cavalry corps under Shinha's command got themselves captured in a situation similar to the one Izapnar's forces had found themselves in, without crossing their swords with their enemy even once.

After a short while, Hivodir's corps caught up the captured Gazzetta troops and climbed up the wall. Hivodir was laughing loudly, looking down at the captured troops, thinking that they can now be easily disposed of. However, Yuusuke did not allow him to carry out his wish and ordered approaching Gazzetta cavalry to halt its advance. The cavalry group, seeing their main army being taken hostage, had no other choice but to concede.

***

"Gather the remaining members of the elite troupes in the central command. In the face of such odds we have no other choice but to regroup!" (Izapnar)

Izapnar was planning to barricade himself and his remaining soldiers within the central command while keeping the masses agitated, thus prolonging the civil war and giving him time to come up with a retaliation plan to shift the blame towards the queen. First of all, the very fact that the queen allowed a foreign army to enter their lands, and even more so, to let them enter within Paula's walls was preposterous. Also, that she had relied on the strength of Fonclanc's army to repel the Gazzetta's invasion was a national

disgrace and a grave mistake.

There were no more doubts that the queen's entourage, Zeshald, was loyal to Fonclanc. He shifted all his plans to promote the propaganda that the central figure of Blue Garden was deceived by Fonclanc. By manipulating the information like that, he planned to blame the queen for the disgrace of all the divine arts users of the nation.

For that reason he somehow had to deal with Zeshald. Without eliminating Fonclanc's support for the queen, it would be impossible to oppose the reconciliation policy between the king Esvobus and queen Rishause. Thus, he could only wait for Belushya, who had successfully infiltrated the water mirror, to accomplish her mission.

"It's not over… I will manage somehow. I expect them to split part of their force to deal with the Gazzetta's army, so only part of them should head towards here." (Izapnar)

While he was grumbling about the measures he had to take and the prospects for the future, the supreme commander was thinking of a speech that would serve to agitate the masses. Izapnar crumbled the paper with a speech that did not please him and threw it away. As he filled a cup with water from a jug to clench his thirst, only the sound of the cup being filled resounded in the room.

Only then did he noticed that his hands were trembling wildly. Putting his hands into the pockets to hide the trembling, Izapnar continued to polish his plan.

"At any rate, if I can make the queen lose the support of the masses… Hey! Where is Volmes! Communications officer!" (Izapnar)

The plan to prolong the civil war was the do or die last ditch effort for Izapnar. Once the water mirror had gained the upper hand and forced the elite troupes to withdraw, it was already too late to clutch for victory. Except for fleeing the country, the only remaining opportunity for Izapnar to stay alive was to beg for the queen's pardon.

"What is happening with the regrouping of the elite troupes?! I want the report, FAST! Whatever you are doing… do it faster for fuck's sake!"

Only Volmes stayed at Izapnar's side, who was muttering and shouting by himself in the supreme commander's office of the central command.

Chapter 28: Shinha's Warning

As the disarmament of the Gazzetta army was being carried out, Zeshald was keeping a close watch on the withdrawal of the elite troops and was providing the appropriate commands to prevent his own forces from chasing too far. With the conclusion of this battle, the relationship between Blue Garden and Fonclanc would probably improve. Feeling like a huge weight was lifted off his shoulders, Zeshald let out a sigh.

The civil war in Blue Garden would end after the capturing of supreme commander Izapnar and after gaining complete control of Paula's central command. Even though Gazzetta's attack had caught him by surprise, their king, Shinha, had provoked Yuusuke, the [God of Calamity], and had spectacularly self-destructed, experiencing a calamity for himself.

"Zeshald dono, shall we proceed to take over Paula's central command?"(Queen's army's officer)

"Proceed with it. I will join the fight myself to hasten our victory."(Zeshald)

While contemplating his future plans in the well ventilated headquarters of the water mirror, Zeshald looked down at the urban areas of Paula. It was about time for the citizens to get up and start bustling around their businesses. In the center of this urban area, soldier carriages were being prepared for the raid on Paula's central command.

The divine arts users that formed Zeshald's escort looked at the rushed preparations for the raid and the disarmed Gazzetta soldiers coming out of the huge wall prison structure. It took just a moment for them to lose their concentration and…

"Mhm?!"(Zeshald)

Belushya charged at Zeshald from behind, aiming her hand between his left shoulder blade and his spine, using her pride, the disseminating type (付与系) water art. Belushya's water art would freeze her target instantly. It was a terrifying assassination type water art which, if she managed to freeze the chest of her opponent, would freeze the heart causing her target to die instantly.

Although the person's resistance varied according to the strength of their divine arts, Belushya had trained her divine arts from young age. She was sure that even if Zeshald was an exceptionally strong divine arts user, and even if he had a sacred treasure that increased his resistance to other divine arts, he would not be able to defend against her if she focused only on his heart.

—-TSISH sound of something breaking reached her ears.

Feeling the familiar feeling in her hand, Belushya was assured that she had successfully completed her mission and started moving towards her retreat path. But, as she tried to move towards the back of the room, someone grabbed her arm. As she slowly turned to look over her shoulder, she saw Zeshald, who she thought was surely dead, grasping her arm.

As she tried to shake off the last struggles of the man, a broad grin appeared on Zeshald's face that left her breathless.

"?!"(Belushya)

"It's unfortunate."(Zeshald)

Being sure that she completely froze the man's heart, she once again stretched her hand to repeat the attack. Unfortunately for her, this time Zeshald was faster.

"Shoutensei!"(Zeshald)

"Uh…? Hyaaaaaa!"(Belushya)

After receiving a water art counterattack from Zeshald, Belushya's body tensed and stiffened as it bent backwards and, with a loud shriek, the assassin fell down. As the body reached the floor it started convulsing.

"Wh..what is this?!"(Guards)

"Hmm, it looks like an assassin to me…"(Zeshald)

Explaining the situation to the startled guards, Zeshald picked a fragment of a shattered ring from the floor. It was a fragment of the silver ring that was delivered to him by Reifold together with the fake sacred treasure. Yuusuke called it "Sacrificial ring."

This ring had the effect of taking on a fatal blow for his wearer. It was truly a mysterious item since it would only protect its wearer from any fatal damage once, after which its effect would end immediately.

If the wearer was poisoned, the ring would not react to the poison until the moment when death approached the wearer. It would then activate, taking the deadly damage for its user only to have the user die from the same poison immediately after the ring has ceased functioning. It would be the same for deaths by drowning or burning. If one was to be squished by a heavy object, the outcome would also be the same.

If the wearer was stabbed with a sword or spear, the ring would take the fatal damage from the blow, but the user was still very likely to die from the after effects of the wound or the weapon still protruding from his body.

To tell the truth, if one had to compare the ring to its counterpart, the Sacred Treasure, the usability of the ring was, at the very best, questionable, since the appropriate time to use the ring could not be controlled and the usage itself was difficult. Despite that Zeshald got lucky as the assassin used a special technique in her attempt to kill him.

This time, the ring judged Belushya's [Freeze] to be a deadly divine art and activated, taking the damage instead of Zeshald. At that moment the recovery effect of the sacred treasure kicked in and started to heal his frozen heart. Zeshald did not lose his consciousness and supplemented the effect of the treasure with his own healing type divine art. As his body had nearly inexhaustible vitality, it did not suffer much stress while the heart had stopped for a moment.

"Is she…dead?"(Guard)

"No, I used a strong divine art aimed at her blood vessels."(Zeshald)

When Zeshald touched his assassin's arm, he felt something out of ordinary and struck there. Leader of the water mirror just shrugged his shoulders, talking about the unexpected effectiveness of his divine art.

When she was a child, Belushya had misused a divine art and was wounded all over her body. Since that incident she had lost almost all her senses of touch.

Since she felt nearly nothing, she had a strong pain and injury tolerance, thus Belushya became proficient in the normally dangerous disseminating type divine water arts. These arts, coupled with her assassination skills, had placed her in the center of the underground operations until now.

Perhaps it was because of her constitution and sense of duty, she did not show any ordinary emotions and left others with a cold impression. In time, coworkers started teasing her, calling her names like "Ice queen".

Touching her hand, Zeshald had healed the nerves and Belushya, overwhelmed by the sudden wave of sense, had simply fainted. For this woman who had not felt such sensations since she was a child, these sensations became a destructive torrent of pleasure (TN: I shit you not, that was what the author wrote….) that had simply blew her mind.

Since Belushya's divine art did not affect her opponent if she could not get close to him, she was restrained while she was still unconscious.

Finally, as her convulsions calmed down, the face of the assassin, nicknamed ice queen, blushed slightly, a faint happy expression appearing on her face.

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Only the highest ranking members were informed about the assassination attempt within the water mirror's headquarters. Zeshald was currently leading the divine arts militia against the Paula's command. At the same time, Shinha calmly stood before the queen's army, against the wall that had captured them. Although his army had been disarmed and he was clad in handcuffs, he maintained the composed atmosphere around him.

Thinking that he might have had some complaints, Yuusuke approached the king of Gazzetta. The queen had also approached Shinha along with two of her handmaidens and now stood directly before him.

Queen Rishause was a beautiful woman and her light blue, long hair only enhanced the tidy atmosphere around her. Her handmaidens were also quite beautiful and although they were twins and had identical looks, the air they carried around them was completely opposite.

If princess Violet could be compared to fireworks, queen Rishause gave off an image of a clear stream. Yuusuke had made a note of the fact that there are a lot of beautiful women in the Blue Garden. (TN: in Japanese the text read "Yuusuke had entered a record in the database of his mind…")

Determinedly standing before Shinha, Rishause frowned slightly and started to speak with a strong? voice.

“You… what were you planning to do?”(Rishause)

“I was on my way to meet Risha. To my regret, our big moment has been spoiled.”(Shinha)

“War is but a moment of luck,” shrugging his shoulders as he said this. Rishause showed him a painful look on her face in reply.

“Why did you start this absurd fight?”(Rishause)

“It was not absurd, I just slightly underestimated the strength of the darkness god corps.”(Shinha)

That very strength was the “absurd” thing here. If not for that power, Shinha would have won and would not have been in the state he is currently in. They (Gazzetta) were not all united and the fact that the leader mobilized the army before his heir was born spoke a bit about that fact.

“Did you intend to attack me?”(Rishause)

“Never. My plan was to free you all along.”(Shinha)

“To free me? Are you saying that I am just a bird in a cage?”(Rishause)

“Don’t you realize your position? Or are you pretending to be as tough as always?”(Shinha)

Shinha acted as if he could see through the firm attitude that the queen had been displaying. Rishause sighed and murmured, “You arrogant man…”

“That may be right, however a king without pride can’t lead his own people.”(Shinha)

Shinha and Rishause spoke to each other as if they had been acquaintances. Listening to their conversation that was quite similar to a lover’s quarrel, Yuusuke decided to leave them be for a little while longer.

“Hey you, you have been acting rude towards her majesty for long enough!”(Queen’s handmaids)

Unable to endure Shinha’s attitude towards their queen any longer, one of the twin sisters, Masha, shouted at Shinha.

“We are old friends, right Risha?”(Shinha)

“We were. In the past.”(Rishause)

Still, Shinha’s shameless and carefree attitude, which he had displayed quite carelessly, along with the strong displeasure shown by the queen, had Misha fall for a feeling that was pretty close to jealousy and the handmaiden started shouting abusive remarks towards Shinha.

“[Artless] trash!”(Misha)

That instant a ferocious smile appeared on Shinha’s face forcing Misha to instinctively back off.

“Did you hear that, Risha. Even your closest retainers are like that.”(Shinha)

“…”(Rishause)

“Eh? Eh?!”(Misha)

Rishause was continuously biting her lips. Misha’s younger sister, Sasha turned towards her sister, who was looking towards the two with bewildered and confused look on her face and explained.

“Because her highness treats [artless] similarly to servants, she is striving to free them through her political measures.”(Sasha)

Even if the divine arts users and [artless] were allowed to live their lives in the city, both parties antagonized each other. They would have to break down their preconceptions towards each other in order for them to lead their ordinary lives side by side.

For that reason [artless] ownership was used as a stepping stone and hit first by changing it to protection policy. So, such an utterance by a person that is closest to the queen left a distinct mark on queen’s reputation. Realizing that Misha hurriedly turned towards the queen and hastily said.

“I didn’t mean it to sound like that! I was referring to his lack of respect towards royalty and his social position—”(Misha)

“I am also a king of Gazzetta, yet there is not a drop of respect in your actions~”(Shinha)

“You are prisoner of our country!”(Misha)

“Aaah, without even crossing swords with your country’s military once and having been done in by the darkness god corps of Fonclanc?”(Shinha)

“Ugh…!”(Misha)

Resolute arguments and facts were sarcastically countered and, furthermore, reinforced.

“By the way, the old man, commanding the water mirror, is also a person that was related to Fonclanc. Hmm, I thought this country was supposed to be called Blue Garden…”(Shinha)

“Grrrr…!”(Misha)

Rishause objected Shinha’s suggestive tone by slightly strengthening her own voice and spoke to calm Misha, who seemed to be on the verge of blowing up.(reminds me of the head popping scene in the kingsman)

“Fonclanc only lent us a bit of their strength this time.”(Rishause)

It did not mean that Rishause accepted the caste system that was the basis of Fonclanc’s social structure.

“You might be thinking of it as such, but what will really happen?”(Shinha)

Shinha questioned Rishause’s diplomatic skills and asked whether the queen will avoid king Esvobus’s reconciliation policy.

“Will you let the Fonclanc army or the leader of the water mirror stay, or will you make them leave?”(Shinha)

Hearing this, a dumb expression appeared on Misha’s face. Sasha also seemed concerned and slightly narrowed her eyes. After eventually driving out the supreme commander of Paula and taking the complete power within her grasp, wouldn’t she become the same figure head again only in the hands of a different puppet master? This was the true question hidden within Shinha’s words.

“I, I…”(Rishause)

This did not mean that Rishause was not being uncomfortable as she cast her gaze downwards to hide the shaking of her irises. She screamed in her heart that she did not have any other choice, that she had no other means of opposing Izapnar. The words fitting for a “bird in the cage”, as Shinha has called her, were running amok within her heart.

“So, what is to become of us?”(Shinha)

Having driven Rishause into the corner, Shinha completely changed the topic from the question he had asked earlier. Relaxing his shoulders and returning to his previous tone, he asked about the fate of him and his army. As they were currently imprisoned by Blue Garden, the queen was the person who would decide their fate.

“…In my name, I order you to immediately leave the territory of Blue Garden.”(Rishause)

Rishause, with her authority of the queen, ordered to release Shinha and his troops, and for them to leave her country. Her handmaidens objected to the queen’s decision to let them go just like that and urged her to reconsider, however the queen stood strong by her decision. Gazzetta’s army had not dealt much damage to Blue Garden and the soldiers did not seem particularly dissatisfied either.

Their army’s strength was intimidating, but in the end they were not able to do anything and became prisoners of war, thus part of the divine arts militia soldiers were happy with the decision.

“Shinha, I will definitely fulfill my father’s dream. Promise me you will not lay a finger on this country until I fall.”(Rishause)

“You mean… to watch over you? Very well, I will watch over your country for a while.”(Shinha)

Shinha arrogantly looked down on the queen until the very end. Although her handmaidens were scowling, Rishause relaxed, with the tension in her face becoming replaced by a smile.

“Truly… you have not changed at all since back then.”(Rishause)

"You too. People probably won't tell you that though. Oh, and you have also become quite a beauty as well."(Shinha)

"Wha-what the hell do you think you are saying!"(Rishause)

"Lady Rishause, your language, your language!"(Misha)

Having received a surprise attack from her opponent that she also had feelings for, queen Rishause carelessly let the feelings that she had sealed deep behind her aura of the water priestess queen surface for a brief moment. With Misha's remark, she blushed while covering her mouth thus showing her cute side.

"Phmph!"(Shinha)

"A-anyhow, Gazzetta army is now free. Remove their sha—"(Rishause)

Rishause ordered the divine arts militia to unfasten the shackles of Shinha's army, which was restrained in a separate place.

Dissatisfied with the arrogance that Shinha showed towards their queen, the two handmaidens tried to convince their queen to reconsider, saying things like "They are our prisoners after all," aiming to get revenge on Shinha while showing their superiority.

Shinha began analyzing the hand (TN: as in hand of cards) that he was playing with, looking for a way to destroy their scorn and to gain an advantage for his army. As he only had the cards of pride and belligerence, he decided to try playing them.

"Let me give you one piece of advice. For the white clan, their weapons are only one of their tools."(Shinha)

Shinha said that with a feral smile, making the divine arts militia stop in their tracks and turn towards him with dubious expressions on their faces. Rishause stepped back as she knew the meaning of such an expression on Shinha's face.

"If we don't have our tools, we can fight using our bodies alone. LIKE THIS!"(Shinha)

Shinha lifter his shackled hands in front of his chest and tore through them by sheer strength. Seeing that, White Sword knights followed their king and one by one tore through their shackles. Although they were shackled with wooden shackles that were made to be used on the [artless], divine arts militia could only stare, eyes wide, as the shackles were destroyed using brute force alone.

However it seemed that divine arts users who were serving in the White Sword cavalry, could not mimic the same action and appealed to get the shackles removed via normal means.

Glaring at the frozen divine arts militia, Shinha kicked at the ground like a beast and instantly closed the distance between him and Rishause. Her two maidens reacted to that, but as Shinha was already leaping into Rishause's bosom, they could not put water arts defense nor attack Shinha anymore.

"…Wha?!"(Rishause)

"You are… naïve."(Shinha)

Looking at the sky blue pupils in the startled, wide opened eyes, Shinha extended his hand toward queen's head, gently grabbed a light blue strand of Rishause's hair, kissed them, and retreated after letting the strand of hair fall. The two handmaidens rushed to the queen's side, taking the position that Shinha was at just a moment ago and shot their glances towards the [artless] king.

Shinha sneered, turned his back at the women, and swiftly returned to his comrades' side. This series of actions seemed to have carried a meaning of "I could've broken the shackles and killed you anytime."

To tell the truth, it was not the kiss on the queen's hair, all of the White Sword were prisoners, yet the Blue Garden's side could not move a finger.

The divine arts militia were eyeing the Gazzetta army, which was preparing for their retreat with cautious eyes. Just as the atmosphere around them was starting to get dangerous, the black haired captain of the darkness god corps of Fonclanc stepped up to meet the commander of the White Sword knights.

This struggle carried some meaning as some of the Gazzetta soldiers visibly tensed at the entrance of the commanding officer of the [overpowered] darkness god corps.

"Hey, Shinha!"(Yuusuke)

"Yuusuke? You completely done us in~"(Shinha)

"Thanks to you, this had become troublesome again. Did you really have to show off your strength?" said Yuusuke as he approached Shinha. Yuusuke was so angry, that not only the atmosphere he gave off was different, but his attitude made a complete turn as well. Shinha shifted his gaze to observe the scale of Yuusuke's capacity and spoke of an important phrase (keyword) in a laid back attitude as if nothing had happened.

"You played out your role of an evil god nicely with that power."(Shinha)

"!"(Yuusuke)

Shinha showed a faint smile after seeing Yuusuke's face stiffen against his own will. Yuusuke expected that no one else besides Zeshald and Sun knew that he was called to this world to become an evil god. Rishause, who was listening to them with her face still red from shame, tilted her head slightly at the mentioning of the evil god.

"Your presence in this world is large, and thin (weak/small?)"(Shinha)

Standing on the thousands years of history, Shinha stated his view of Yuusuke, a summoned being in this world. His words were heavy and thick with the desire of the resurrection of the white clan, inherited for hundreds of thousands of years since the forgotten times.

"The revival of the white clan warrants the fall of the rule of the art users. It is the role of the evil god to start this."(Shinha)

"Why is that, can't you live side by side?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke shot back at Shinha's conclusion, inquiring what kind of reason or rule would require the destruction of either side. He did not inquire about the evil god's part as he

was worried about all the people around him.

“Divine arts users that caused the downfall of the white clan are living in prosperity thus the prosperity of the white clan required the downfall of the divine arts user’s world.”(Shinha)

“That is your answer, eh? But it would be just a repeat of what happened before, right?”(Yuusuke)

“That might be so, prosperity is not endless. This is the cycle of life that those, living in Kaltcio are bound to.”(Shinha)

“…You…”(Yuusuke)

Shinha’s grand speech, brimming with self-confidence and permeated with conviction that his knowledge was greater than anyone else, incited a desire within Yuusuke to find out what Shinha knows about the evil god. The three thousand years of history were collected in the eyes of the white clan leader.

“I will await you in the village where the history of the evil god is kept. You will definitely come to Gazzetta.”(Shinha)

Yuusuke, worried by the speech, containing some sort of threatening hidden message, tried to ask for the meaning of what Shinha had said. But, at that moment, a wind arts communications officer riding on the horseback approached them and whispered something to Shinha. Listening to his subordinate the Gazzetta king frowned.

“Let me correct myself. I hope you will come to see it for yourself if you are interested.”(Shinha)

Having said that Shinha saddled his horse and issued a withdrawal order to the white sword cavalry.

“Withdraw!”(Shinha)

Gazzetta’s army merged to a single unit several hundreds of meters away from the main fortress. There, they turned towards the direction of Gazzetta and started leaving the hooves of their horses resounding on the drying ground and raising a cloud of dust in their wake.

“Your existence is thin, eh?…”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke sighed as he watched the Gazzetta army off, dismantling the huge wall and repairing the main fortress was his top concern at the moment. After all, he borrowed a considerable amount of resources from the main fortress to build his wall and a huge part of the upper half of the fortress was gone.

“Still, except for being annoying it was useless…”(Yuusuke)

It seemed that early rising residents that lived in part of the main fortress, from which the materials were taken from, were in for an unpleasant surprise in the coming morning.

Chapter 29: The repatriation of the Darkness God Corps

The world will change when she woke up in the morning.

That was what she thought at that time. She woke up and started going about her normal routine, as she changed into her water troupe uniform. Normally, she would leave her room and head towards the water mirror hq, but for some reason she was walking down the aisle of the water mirror militia. By the time Plausha awoke, the council halls have been suppressed by the water mirror forces.

Originally, Plausha was suspected to be working for Izapnar's faction among the water mirror, but during this civil war commotion, she was sleeping in her room without participating in it, thus the suspicion was lifted off her. Thus, she wasn't being detained and was able to walk around freely in and out of her room.

Izapnar had heard from Volmes that there was a confidant girl, but there weren't many details about her activities and the position about Plausha wasn't told to him either. As the one managing the personnel selection and their intelligence network was Volmes, there were some fire arts personnel who knew about Plausha's duty, but for some reason, they all disappeared. Izapnar's screams could be heard, "That Volmes must have ran away!!!!".

During the morning, elites teams and militia teams of the Water Mirror were scouring the urban areas of Paula, gaining control of facilities and bureaucracy institutions belonging to Izpanar's faction. An imposing and orderly atmosphere of the carriages that moved through the streets of the city centre could be seen. The morning of Paula welcomed the end of Izapnar's regime.

"Everything, is all but lost….."

Plausha who was walking along the path of the Great Wall, found that an awfully lot of mobile stores had gone missing and were replaced by a new refreshing sight of unfamiliar uniforms of elites members on the street ahead.

Along the railguard was an individual who was looking far into the distance, he was wearing a black uniform and a black mantle, his hair was also black in color.

".....eh? Isn't this a different elite team?"(Plausha)

That person standing there wore the black corps uniform which had the Fonclanc palace's coat of Arms. She immediately stopped and stared at him as she realised that he was the rumored, "Hero of Gearhawk". In this case, it can be correctly said that one is too scared to move.

As he felt a presence, the person who don the darkness god corps uniform looked back at Plausha.

After noticing a cautious and trembling girl who was wearing an elite troupe uniform, Yuusuke spoke out to her with a wry smile.

“There is no need to be so scared.”(Yuusuke)

“I~I’m not scared!”(Plausha)

Hearing her falsetto voice and seeing her trembling shoulders, Yuusuke replied with,”I am so wrong, I should have switch to the topic of the weather around here!” in an attempt to correct his mistakes.

“Ah, I’m sorry.”(Yuusuke)

“N~no problem….”(Plausha)

When he first saw her, she gave off a similar impression, much like Sun, who is around the same age, like what Sun had experience in the past and being rather cautious, a kind of feeling like she was stuck in somewhere with walls. As it was their first meeting, prior to it just a few hours ago they were enemies, thus it was natural for her to have this reaction. Yuusuke thought and began to try to come into contact with her naturally.

The image which Plausha had imagined through countless rumors was: “A man of valor, who single handedly raised an entire elite team,” and to her, it seemed that this wasn’t the person standing in front of her, thus she was a little puzzled. Although he had an unusual appearance, she could not sense any divine arts aura from him. She couldn't exactly say why, but he was giving off an impression of a “Normal person”.

“Hey you, are you really the Hero of Gearhawk, who everyone is talking about?”(Plausha)

“ah~that~.....honestly, it was a failure.”(Yuusuke)

To hear that Gearhawk Fortress was a failure, surprised Plausha. Although he wasn’t trying to be humble, Yuusuke even showed a gesture of scratching his head along with a look that it really failed, making people naturally curious about his reasonings.

“By using something apart from total annihilation, this time it seems that confinement had worked.”(Yuusuke)

A number of wind troupe members, the elites of Blue Garden, had been captured in Fonclanc territories,so the great number of victims of the fortress were mostly non-combatants. Due to the waiting of the civil war turmoil this time, it could have been solved quickly if Izapnar had stumbled earlier.

“Coulda Woulda Shoulda”, as Yuusuke laughed at himself. Plausha was confused with the words “this time”, as she did not know what had happened. But she reacted to Yuusuke’s other words, “It was good that now it didn’t end with total annihilation.”

“Why did you not do so?”(Plausha)

“At that time there wasn’t any time for feelings.”

“You should have just captured them,” she wanted to say that, but the words wouldn’t come out of her mouth so easily, “why didn’t you do so, if you had done that, my sister wouldn’t have died.” All the emotions that welled up inside of Plausha began to spill out and become one word.

“.....why?”(Plausha)

She unintendedly muttered it out, as her answer wasn’t what she intended to say.

“Because I was scared.”(Yuusuke)

“Eh?”(Plausha)

“I didn’t want to die.”(Yuusuke)

Plausha opened her eyes wide, as she was swept away by a vortex of gushing feelings caused by the so called “Hero” surprising answer.

“You are known as the hero and an elite knight and you fear death?”(Plausha)

“Well, I am still a normal person inside.”(Yuusuke)

Hearing that, Plausha shook as she remembered the impression of Yuusuke’s first words that felt like an “ordinary person” and she thought of her sister. From her memories of her, she remembered that she was a pretty ordinary woman. Although the side of her sister that she had shown during her mission was unknown to Plausha.

“What happened at Gearhawk fortress?”

Plausha asked this, as details of what happened wasn’t circulated amongst the general public, nor the Militias of Blue Garden.

Being one of the related party, the “Hero of Gearhawk”, he explained to Plausha the full details of the entire incident, including the mountain of corpses and the terrible things that had been done. Upon hearing the whole story, Plausha realized the extent of how ignorant she was.

Although her sister’s wind arts were not under the attack system type, from the story that she had heard, the people who were involved almost non of them had not inflict direct harm and the fact that they had participated as team members in the operation. She didn’t think that he had no choice, but to fight with her sister and to hear it from the voice of the person who had defeated her sister seemed to have a great meaning.

Although there were some parts missing, her sister’s corpse was beautiful. It seems that “his” divine arts had restored the body to it’s previous form. After knowing Yuusuke’s nature, Plausha was able to organize her feelings.

“Captain! Wow you have immediately hooked a girl from Blue Garden~”(Fonke)

“No! Don’t put me on the same level as you.”(Yuusuke)

Hearing Fonke jeering from the bottom of the Great Wall, Yuusuke leaned out and retorted.

“Well then, I shall be heading off.”(Yuusuke)

“Ah, yes, thank you for the conversation.”(Plausha)

Looking at the jet-black mantle of the “Hero of Gearhawk” fluttering away into the distance, Plausha’s gloomy expression had went along with it.

Once Yuusuke's group, which consisted of Fonclanc's army, had arrived at Deernook Fortress, it was declared that part of the soldiers' team were to be stationed in the fortress, while the darkness god corps were to return to Sanc Adiet. Hivodir was also together with him. His credit was, "to drive an enemy group 3 times as large as his team towards the trap that Yuusuke had laid."

Zeshald, on the other hand had to perform tasks such as the parliamentary inheritance and the setting up of a meeting for King Esvosbus and Queen Risha, thus he had planned to remain in Paula for another 4 ~ 5 days.

After which, he would be taking on the responsibility of an entourage to "Return the Queen's sacred treasure", followed by his returning to Rufk village for his retirement.

It had been 2 days since the Darkness God Corps and Hivodir had returned to Sanc Adiett, today is the 10th day of Zalnar's month of fire .

The "Hero of Gearhawk", now also known as the "Hero of Deernook" who had brought about victory for Fonclanc. This rumor became a hot topic in the city of Sanc Adiet. Information about Gazzetta was unnaturally not included. It seemed that King Esvosbus had been controlling the usual flow of information.

Many citizens of Fonclanc were celebrating the triumphant return of the Darkness God Corps, whom had returned to Volance palace.

"You have returned, Yuusuke!"(Violet)

"Welcome back, Mr. Yuusuke."(Sun)

"I'm bac-k, why is Sun here in the palace?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was surprised by the unexpected reception of his early return. Violet concluded his surprise with her answer, "I called her over." It seems like she had been invited over to the palace on the evening of Yuusuke's departure to the fortress construction and had been staying here since then. Although the main reason was being evaded, he could roughly guessed it.

"As I thought that Sun, who is living alone, is lonely and I wanted to hear more things about Zeshald."(Violet)

"In short, I, myself am lonely."(Yuusuke)

"Princess! This unworthy Hivodir have return from a successful mission!"(Hivodir)

"Oh, your efforts are appreciated. Father will be so glad to hear it."(Violet)

After giving the appropriate thanks to Hivodir, Violet turned to Yuusuke and asked him about the mission. As Zeshald would be returning in a few days time, she was feeling all kinds of moods. Sloppily, Yuusuke headed towards his room after Hivodir said goodbye. After that, he saw Sun's appearance which reminded him of the Gazzetta's army and King Shinha.

“Hmmm… somehow they felt more like a battle force of a mercenary group rather than a national army.”

He began to analyze the things that Shinha had done, such as not considering the diplomatic relations between nations, removing any obstacles that seemed to block his way like an Overlord.

An attempt to drag Yuusuke along into the scheme was enacted, but if the sovereignty state of Gazzetta was able to gain Yuusuke, who had a imba divine art which could create special equipments like the ones he had shown in Paula, then they could simply trample all other countries in Kaltcio with just normal divine arts users.

“This is a foolish move that does not fit a fiance candidate, do not force me into it.”(Hivodir)

Things seemed to arrive at a stage where Hivodir chose to stick to Yuusuke. As he understood him by mingling with him often, Yuusuke doesn’t have any ounce of ambition to power, even though he was very close to Violet, there wasn’t any gesture of feelings that he was aiming towards the seat to become her husband.

If they had known it, the fiance candidates would find it funny that they were impatient. Even though, if Yuusuke had the feeling to do that, in some terms it might turn out to be better.

Currently his life up till now, he always had a complex about his divine arts abilities being weak, as he was from the prestigious house of Volce. Hivodir had always been thinking about how to rise to power in this world, but now he had began to change and realize the value of possible comrades and friends.

“Well, it is as it is. Wonder what would I get as a reward from the king ~ ”(Hivodir)

He experience his first battle and returning safely from it, thus resulting in him to allow composure to his feelings. Amongst the fiance candidates and the palace elites, there wasn’t many of them who had actual combat experience, due to the fact that there wasn’t any opportunity to do so recently.

On that day, the figure of Hivodir skipping along the hallways of the upper floors of the palace had been witnessed by several people walking by.

(Author notes : This time, in summary, the mess of Fonclanc and Blue Garden has been settled. The next part is expected to be a more relaxed mode.)

Chapter 30: Mission Complete

The next day, after the Darkness God Corps had returned after completing their mission, Yuusuke was given permission to use his remaining vacation days, thus he decided to bring Sun back to Rufk Village. This time, due to his achievements at Paula, the King's entourage and bureaucrats were deliberating on what reward should be given to Yuusuke.

Should they give him a formal identity as a noble of Fonclanc? Or to fix him a place like a mansion in the noble district? Then, a problem had occurred during the deliberating, as there were reports from the local administrator about the appearance of the Gazzetta army in the villages of the [Artless] within the territory.

Due to the rumors about the Civil war in Paula, there was an unnatural amount of missing information about Gazzetta, which was enough to cause a problem.

"Well then, I will see you guys in around 3 days time."(Yuusuke)

"Thanks for your work, Captain."

"Take care of yourself along the way."

"It's okay to come again and play with me, Sun."(Violet)

Violet and Yuusuke's underlings were sending them off as Yuusuke and Sun boarded the carriage from the palace that was headed towards Rufk Village.

"Come to think of it, this is the first time I had a ride in a carriage with only Mr.Yuusuke."(Sun)

"Seems like it. Anyways, aren't you tired from Violet abusing her power?"(Yuusuke)

"No, it was very fun."(Sun)

"I see."(Yuusuke)

They began leisurely chatting about what happened, along the highway. Sun began summarizing the events that happened in the 6 days of her stay in the palace. Eating together, playing cards together, happily chatting till late at night which was followed by sleeping together.

In order to draw the attention of Violet, the fiance candidates who could not display their gentleman face to Violet had treated Sun cruelly, causing Violet's mood to turn sour, as their "gentlemanly" actions were just superficial in order to come in contact with Violet.

"Yeah, that reminds me that the fiance candidates other than Hivodir didn't show their faces around Violet."(Sun)

"In any case, Hivodir, in order to become the center of the fiance candidates, restrained himself from getting friends…"(Yuusuke)

As there wasn't a chance to appeal frequently to Violet, they had to spend their time

quietly. When the Darkness God Corps had headed towards Deernook Fortress, both Yuusuke and Hivodir were absent and that provided them with a chance, thus they aggressively tried to self appeal to her.

“Have you gotten used to the Divine art users?”(Yuusuke)

“....still, a little scared……but not as bad as last time.”(Sun)

“I see.”(Yuusuke)

“Ah, Do you know, Mr Yuusuke is like a teacher, as long as you are near there is a peace of mind?”(Sun)

And in that rhythm, they had steadily advanced on the highway, arriving at the Village around mid afternoon.

“SUN! YUUSUKE!”(Bahana)

“Aunt Bahana, we’re back.”(Sun)

You aren’t in a rush for something are you?”(Yuusuke)

After entering the village, the carriage stopped in front of Zeshald’s house, and out of nowhere the restless figure of Bahana had appeared. A group of villagers, including the officer from the harvest festival, came up to us too.

“Thank god, you guys have really come back….you both came back safely.”(Bahana)

Yuusuke and Sun had a stunt look on their face, as they began asking the reason why Bahana and the villagers were relieved. Just a few days ago, on the day when Yuusuke was fighting at Paula, a group of [Artless] warriors came to the village claiming to be Gazzetta’s army and were looking for Sun.

After hearing that Sun was being summoned to the palace in Sanc Adiet, they began discussing amongst themselves, “they are one step ahead of us~” and “Don’t tell me they have the ability to predict the future~”, as they resigned due to the fact that they could not kidnap someone who wasn’t here and they then had a wind art user to report to someone.

“Those who are dissatisfied with the current circumstances of living in this country, you can come with us to Gazzetta.”(Gazzetta guerilla)

After regrouping, they went to the village square and gathered the villagers, saying that their original purpose was to call out to all those who would like to seek refuge in Gazzetta.

However, in Rufk Village there was no divine art user controlling the area as Zeshald who was originally a Divine art user, had lived together alongside with the villagers. Thus, there wasn’t any tax collection, and there was Yuusuke, who recently became an officer under the conditions of favorable treatment which had improved the overall environment. Thus, there was almost no discontent from the villagers.

There were several people who were accosted to accept their proposal and had responded by following them. Also in the other villages, it seemed that a messenger claiming to be from Gazzetta's army had visited and mingled with the neighbouring villages in the same way.

As Yuusuke had not heard about it in the palace, he thought that the only possibility was that King Esvobus was placing a gag order on this issue.

"I wonder if it is because of the protection ordinance after all."

By the way, the ones who had joined the corresponder out of the villagers included Thalys. After the incident during the Harvest festival, he became docile around the village and had wanted a change in environment.

It seems like the terms for joining the Gazzetta army were to become the subordinates of the divine arts users.

Yuusuke began to grasp the meaning of the parting words of Shinha. At the same time, he realised that Sun would be targeted in the future. From Hivodir's analysis of Shinha's behaviour, he felt that Shinha would do anything to get him to come to Gazzetta.

"I hope that he doesn't use such overbearing methods."(Yuusuke)

According to the contents of Gazzetta's national policy, it is difficult to view them as a goodwill ambassador.

Gazzetta simply aims for the revival and prosperity of the white clan empire. In order for them to make it real, they had to collapse the divine arts user society and destroy the world in which the divine arts user dominate. But ~~

~ A deeper insight ~

This world has a Raison d'etre of it's own. The knowledge of the evil god. In a sense it's a kind of clue, and I might consider to go to the village of the white clan, which Shinha had talked about. But for the time being, Yuusuke decided to wait for Zeshald to come back and discuss with him about Gazzetta, Sun and the evil god.

In a room of the council halls, as Zeshald "handed" the sacred treasure to Risha, she showed a half relieved and half puzzled expression. After completing the takeover procedures, Zeshald visited her to return the sacred treasure and to retire from being an entourage, in order to return home to Fonclanc.

"Your Majesty from now on will face a lot of difficulties, this sacred treasure might serve some help to you."(Zeshald)

"Really, is it really alright? And…."(Risha)

Zeshald had first declared that he will return home once things have settled down, on the contrary, Risha felt jealous in her heart. Prior to the meeting which will be conducted at Deernook fortress at a later date, she had to prepare to be confronted with whatever request that will come from King Esvobus.

“There isn’t a need to worry, Fonclanc neither wants the destruction of Blue Garden nor to turn it into a puppet.”(Zeshald)

“Nevertheless, I will never introduce the caste system into this country, understand?”(Risha)

It is a fact that Izapnar had strongly provoked Fonclanc to abolished its ranking system, now it might happen in the reverse, coming back towards Blue Garden as a demand. Considering the history of the number of damages that were inflicted, they might be forced into situation to inevitably compromise.

“In the talks, you will not be pressured into the ranking system, at any rate this king isn’t an ambitious person, he just wishes to be good allies. For example, if Blue Garden were to have plans to increase their power, he would sit there and do nothing about it, that’s the kind of person he is.”(Zeshald)

Zeshald laughed out loud while saying so in order to lighten the mood which had stiffened. Risha began showing a blatant expression of relief while her 2 ladies-in-waiting showed signs of anxiousness,.

“Well, isn’t it good to have this kind of king around? Such antithesis Kings exist as well.”(Zeshald)

As the topic changed and turned towards the King of Gazzetta, Shinha, Risha’s facial expression immediately stiffened again. The world, which Shinha wanted to create, is one where the relationship of the Divine art users and the [Artless] were reversed. The might of Gazzetta is currently unknown, but they have enough power for people to discern that they have forces to bring into a battlefield.

“Someday~~there might come a day where you and him will have to decide….”

“What, I don’t think it would be that pessimistic?”

At the very least, despite his ambitious realization to power and presence, right now he is striving for peace. Zeshald also explained, that unexpectedly he might be convinced into coexistence and co-prosperity. Also he did not want to extend into the details regarding the Evil god.

“I hope to paint the best outcome, which will not neglect the day to day efforts that was placed.”(Zeshald)

Different ideologies of working hand in hand together, as it isn’t wrong to follow an Ideal that isn’t the same. Zeshald left these words to the queen as he walked out of the audience room.

After coming out into the hallway of the central block, as Zeshald was walking towards the exit of the council halls, he stopped as he felt a familiar divine arts wave. He felt a sign of life from the Supreme leader’s office, which should have been empty right now.

The dark office which lights have went out. A flag of Blue Garden hanging in the back wall, and the big office desk right in front of it. An Isolated shadowy figure could be seen standing in front of the desk, as Zeshald called out to it.

“What are you looking for over there?”(Zeshald)

“.....”

The lady who should have been imprisoned in an accommodation facility in another location, slowly turned around and looked back.

“Izapnar and Volmes is no longer here you know?”(Zeshald)

“.....”

Belushya hung her head down in silence. As she came here to report her failure in her mission and the person to report to wasn’t here anymore. She had lost her place, as the organization is gone.

“.....I have lost my place to return to.”(Belushya)

“Hmmm…..”(Zeshald)

Zeshald took the hand of Belushya who was standing alone in the unmanned office and he headed towards the audience room which he had just left. Right now, Risha should still be there. The moment Zeshald touched her hand, Belushya’s body trembled in surprise, as she was being docily dragged along.

“It seems like you got back the senses of your body. Now I’ll give you another choice.”(Reshald)

“.....”

It’s been a long time since Belushya had remember the warmth feeling of someone’s hand. She hoped that this feeling would continue forever.

At the entrance of the Council hall, Zeshald met face to face with his disciple.

“Ah, Instructor Zeshald”(Plausha)

“Oh, Plausha.”(Zeshald)

Her previous dark expression had disappeared and now her natural clear and bright look could be seen. It seems that since the time she had a talk with Yuusuke on top of the Great Wall after the subjugation of the council house, she was able to finally organize her feelings.

“Are you returning to your home country now?”(Plausha)

“Hmm, to stop in the middle of my teaching, I’m sorry.”(Zeshald)

“No, Instructor’s teachings are very helpful.”(Plausha)

And at that rate, they slowly walked up towards the carriage stand of Paula, where they finally said their goodbyes.

“If you are coming back to Paula, please visit me.”(Plausha)

“Hohoho, If you’re passing by Fonclanc, come visit me in the village that I live in.”(Zeshald)

“Yes, at that time, please take care of me.”(Plausha)

Plausha readily answered Zeshald’s question with exact meaning to his words. From now on, whether the policies of Queen Risha might cause a negative impact on Blue Garden is unknown, but one will expect a huge change in the things to come.

Izapnar classified the [Artless] as demi-humans, placing them as an existence that is to be absolutely oppressed by the system, as there were countries dominated by abilities users who forced them into manual labour in order to reduce the resentment of its people and to divert the dissatisfaction.

Those who understand the efficiency of the meritocracy system and could make use of it will obtain a productivity and national power comparable to major countries.

From now on, the manual labour force obligation might ease up, there will also be an expected increase in commoner divine art user refugees. The change in treatment towards the [Artless], that which is different from the 4 great gods faith, will be expected to become popular through exchanges with other countries.

“Well then, stay healthy.”(Zeshald)

“Yes, Instructor take care of yourself too.”(Plausha)

Thus, the top-secret mission that was secretly entrusted over the years to Zeshald by King Esvobus, was finally completed.

Chapter 31: From Now On

After retreating from Blue Garden, the White Sword cavalry of Gazzetta returned to the military town in the hinterlands and were performing the training drills. This town was different from the white clan village, where only the royalty and those close to them gathered. It was a town of the common people of the white clan.

"Your highness, there was a message about the activity of the Nossentes infiltration force from within the capital." (Officer)

"Fmph, so they were watching the conflict between Fonclanc and Blue Garden after all" (Shinha)

"Should we reinforce the border security?" (Officer)

"We are at a clear disadvantage. Continue monitoring the situation after withdrawing the defensive line slightly back. If anyone crosses the border, arrest them immediately." (Shinha)

Even if they knew about the existence of the evil god, the warriors of Gazzetta were not able to achieve any victories in their recent battle, although, from what happened during the battle, the outcome was satisfactory as they were able to get a rough grasp of the power of the evil god. If there was something to be unsatisfied about, it was the fact that they were completely unprepared to become prisoners of war and placed themselves in the mercy of the militias of the Blue Garden that they were looking down on.

Because Yuusuke was there, Shina also had to restrain himself from acting too rashly. Although he had witnessed the strength of the evil god's power before, he was not sure if Yuusuke had any other cards in his hand. As expected, provoking the evil god into that situation was a poor decision.

On the surface, for the sake of keeping its appearance, Gazzetta pretended to adopt the caste system in the cities where divine art users lived. That was necessary to seamlessly merge into this world while striving for the goal of the white clan behind the scenes. As the white clan was the core organization in Gazzetta, they had to remain in the background and had difficulties moving in the open, so they also had to resort to peaceful actions.

During this war, Gazzetta openly announced to the entire world about the existence of the white clan and, if the evil god had not interfered, they would have grasped victory against the divine arts user's armies. Although that was the primary goal of the battle, the actual results were anything but what they expected. The results of the war were like a bonus, while the actions of the reconciliation faction were completely restricted.

"Although I did not expect for Yuusuke to react this quickly. We should hurry up with the recapturing of the Nossente's capital." (Shinha)

The city that was currently a capital of Nossentes used to be a gigantic fortress of the white clan. However, that was around two thousand years ago. The white clan was chased over into the area that became a nation, called Gazzetta. But during its peak, the white clan was a gigantic empire that spanned over half of Kaltcio.

"It would be great to fulfill the desire of our clan during this generation…" (Shinha)

"The current evil god is sympathizing with artless. He will definitely support our cause." (Officer)

"It would be nice if that were the case," replied Shinha, returning a light smile to the officer who tried to encourage him. He saddled his horse and departed towards the village of the white clan.

***

After leaving Paula, Zeshald dropped by the palace to report about the completion of his duty. The king was very grateful for Zeshald's duties and Violet insisted that the old man stay over at the palace for the night before returning to Rufk. Thus, Zeshald returned to the village on the thirteenth day of Zalnar's month of fire.

"Welcome back, Zeshald sensei! …and who might you be?" (Villager)

"Long time no see, sensei. … is that the elite troupe uniform?" (Villager 2?)

"Oh, both of you seem to be doing good." (Zeshald)

"… Hello." (Zeshald's entourage)

"Zeshald sensei had brought a beautiful woman from the Blue Garden!" a happy voice echoed throughout the village, announcing Zeshald's return as a woman suddenly spoke in a friendly voice.

"… my name is Belushya." (Belushya)

On their day of departure from Blue Garden, after meeting the queen, Zeshald visited Belushya, who was loitering in the empty office. After giving her a choice between remaining in Blue Garden and serving the queen or returning along with him to Fonclanc, Belushya chose the latter.

Currently, the troupe leader Volmes was missing along with some troupe members. It was decided that keeping her locked up in an isolation cell would be an undesirable decision, as she wielded the strength to simply break out of a prison cell. Knowing the full extent of her abilities and her past, she was deemed to be a dangerous existence.

Presented with a choice of serving her master or starting a new, tranquil life with Zeshald, Belushya chose the latter. She told herself that she got tired of a lifestyle of hunting other people down and hiding herself.

"If she was able to kill using the power of the healing arts, she will certainly be able to employ her freezing art to heal people." (Zeshald)

As she was very familiar with the human body structure, Belushya would make a fine assistant for him. Using this reasoning, Zeshald had obtained permission from Rishause to take Belushya away. As for Belushya herself, she did not have any qualms regarding living in an artless village.

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After a brief ruckus, the villagers returned back to their daily work and chores. Zeshald sighed, acknowledging advice from Yuusuke stating how hard it is to suddenly return after a long time away from home, which he remembered as he was relaxing on his sofa for the first time in many, many days.

"Shinha, the king of Gazzetta, eh…? the white clan's village, with a history of over three thousand years, that's truly a sight I would like to see." (Zeshald)

"I would also love to visit it, in order to know more about the role of the evil god." (Yuusuke)

Belonging to the royal knight's corps, Yuusuke was at no position to come and go as he pleased. If he left, trouble, such as Sun's kidnapping, may very well happen again.

While having Zeshald and Belushya around was reassuring, it did not mean that they would be able to guard her all day every day. Moreover, locking Sun within the village would be hard on the poor girl as well. And if the enemy decided to go all out, Yuusuke was sure that in the end, coming out on top would be difficult.

"If that happens, you would probably abandon your position at the palace and rush to save Sun." (Zeshald)

"Well, maybe Violet would then somehow gain permission for the mission towards Gazzetta." (Yuusuke)

That said, although Shinha himself did not seem to be hostile, and the country he was living in seemed rough, it was not clear on how much he knew about the evil god, which made them (Yuusuke and co.) feel uneasy.

If this was a game, to draw out the powers of an evil god–… and similar events would require those close to the protagonist to– … and similar developments to occur.

"Honestly, if something were to happen to Sun because of the evil god or something, I would not watch idly." (Zeshald?)

"Forgive me." (Yuusuke?)

Zeshald replied with a joke to what Yuusuke said half joking, but in truth, in their deepest thought they both held thoughts such as "Would I be able to hold back from the destruction of the world?" The topic of their discussion, Sun, was silently sitting alongside Belushya, who was silently sipping her tea, with a blank look on her face.

"Then, what about … sheltering her within Sanc Adiet?" (Zeshald)

"In the city… But the artless district isn't any different." (Yuusuke)

"No no, in the noble's district. You still have not gotten the rewards for your recent deeds have you?" (Zeshald)

When Zeshald had stopped by the palace, there were discussions on how to reward Yuusuke for his latest achievements. As no conclusion was reached, it was decided to let the person himself decide on the matter.

"If you would ask for a residence in the noble's district, Sun could live there and there

would be no way for those guys from Gazzetta to interfere.” (Zeshald)

Thanks to Zeshald, ever since then, Yuusuke was looked to be as someone who was brought up by the artless. Although some might think that way, people who would at most say “he has his circumstances,” but no one would raise an eyebrow if he were to allow an artless girl to live in his residence.

The main mission of the darkness god corps was to patrol the commoner district, lending an ear to what the citizens have to say. As they were patrolling the district every day and spent time walking with the inhabitants, it also helped to alleviate any uneasy thoughts from forming.

As he (Zeshald?) told Violet regarding Sun’s situation when he was called to the palace, there were a lot of palace officials who were acquaintance with the situation. In any case, if Yuusuke had to leave the city on a mission, Sun would be given a duty of being princess Violet’s playmate thus moving to live in the palace.

“Hmmm… buuut what does Sun think about it?” (Yuusuke)

“I- if Yuusuke san is okay with it, I am not against it…” (Sun)

Although Yuusuke tried to shoot this proposition down basing on Sun’s still present fear of the divine arts users, problems that she would have to face as she changed the living environment, and the various considerations that should be done when leaving the village and moving up to the city, Sun was unexpectedly positive about this change and did not seem to be emotionally strained.

“Are you okay with that?” (Yuusuke)

“Yes, after all… Yuusuke will not be inconvenienced with me (anymore), besides…” (Sun)

“Teacher seems to have found a new reliable assistant so I can leave with my mind in peace,” Sun’s reply seems to have changed the atmosphere in the room, as Zeshald scratched his cheek while Belushya (blushed slightly) as if the heat of the tea got to her (head).

“Mm, I understand.” (Yuusuke)

“… somehow it feels like various misunderstandings were reached here.” (Zeshald)

Since Yuusuke had to leave for the palace tomorrow, he had Sun contact him as soon as she finished her preparations to move into the city. Although Zeshald’s protests were ignored, that evening they celebrated Yuusuke’s promotion and Zeshald’s return that also doubled as Belushya’s welcome party.

***

That night.

“Oh, Sun?” (Yuusuke)

“Yuusuke san, are you still awake?” (Sun)

“I spoke to you first, didn’t I?” (Yuusuke)

giggles “Is that so?” (Sun)

Yuusuke spotted Sun sitting in the garden, looking into the darkness, called out to the white haired girl and sat beside her. The clouds over them were yellowish instead of their usual gray under the moonlight, as they flowed through the starry sky.

“So you are feeling anxious?” (Yuusuke)

“No, that’s not it… I was just thinking that I really can’t do anything by myself.” (Sun)

Sun was working as the village doctor’s assistant since the day her parents had died when she was still a child. Although she had spent her days in peace, she understood that she was not much of a use as an assistant.

Although Zeshald had been giving her a purpose in life and a place to call home, she could not act as a spoiled child forever. Belushya’s arrival, as well as Gazzetta’s issues, became a new starting point for Sun. She had similar thoughts about herself before so she wanted to reflect on her future for a while.

“But, if it continues like this, I will end up behaving like a spoiled child at Yuusuke san’s place” (Sun)

“Hmm, so you are looking at it that way?” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke thought about Sun’s self-confidence. She desired a purpose in life to feel that she was being useful and had a place for herself. Yuusuke became worried if he would be able to prepare her, no not prepare, but provide her with it using any and all means necessary.

“Ah, I am so sorry, I am speaking about strange things. I have troubled you again, didn’t I?” (Sun)

“No, not at all. That is not the case. I have recently stepped up to the position where I have subordinates myself. It is a good opportunity (for me?) to think about it.” (Yuusuke)

Although Yuusuke had been swift to rely on his subordinates on the battlefield, he still was not accustomed to ordering them during the time of peace. In order to make himself grow, he came up with an idea to provide Sun with the place of her own that would suit her capabilities.

“…is it really okay with you?” (Sun)

“Well, I myself am at a position where I am relying solely on Violet’s kindness, so don’t hold your hopes up too much.” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke said the words that Sun hoped someone would sometime say to her – “let’s become adults/grow up together!”

“Yuusuke san…” (Sun)

Happy to have finally sorted out her feelings, Sun looked at Yuusuke with eyes, wet

from joy.

Without any ulterior motives the two of them only looked at each other under the moonlight.

***

“Why aren’t those two kissing?!” (Bahana)

“Just give them some time, for their feelings to grow.” (Zeshald)

Zeshald had joined Bahana for a night’s bottle of fruit wine, as they watched over the two youngsters from under the shadow of the bushes, near the window.

Chapter 32: Ghost of the middle class district (Part 1)

Due to the request, made in the comments some time ago, we decided to add a donation button to the sites, so those that want to support the translation are welcome to tip us!

Secondly, although this chapter has (Part1) in it's name it is a standalone chapter as it was split into parts by the author.

Having returned to the palace from Rufk, Yuusuke explained Sun's circumstances to Violet and obtained her approval. Krielov also had no objections and gave his written approval. Due to the construction of the Deernook fortress and the exemplary service during the Paula incident, Yuusuke's request for permission to construct a residence in the noble's district was approved without any issues.

As soon as the arrangements were completed, he would be ready to welcome Sun. During his time between his duties and ordinary tasks, Yuusuke was preoccupied with thinking of any additional measures that would help Sun. As he was thinking of Sun, it occurred to himself that he could also improve his own ability. (TN: took him only 31 chapters ><)

"Can I really do it?" (Yuusuke)

In the [Item Customization Creation System] that was the basis for his customize create ability, there was a so called gimmicks feature that worked along the status and shape customization.

It was a function that was used primarily to create vanity items, such as wings that sprouted from your back. Although they looked real, it was an item that was made for enjoyment and display and did nothing aside from displaying the flapping motion. (TN: the ability itself is called gimmick feature/motion creation thus i will use gimmick for the ability itself and motion items for the item type. Blame the author for the confusing names~)

According to the game, one could add these features by consuming customization points and there were some players in the game that had become [gimmick artisans]. These players created elaborate gimmicks (gimmick data) and were trading it through uploading and similar means. (TN: either item RMT or game model/addon trade)

As Yuusuke had used almost all of his customization points to strengthen his equipment, he did not have a lot of experience in creating vanity items. Thus it occurred to him that he should try creating motion items should he come upon suitable base materials.

"If it actually worked out, it would be pretty interesting…" (Yuusuke)

In order to test his ability Yuusuke procured a toy wooden horse and a toy wagon that were of a suitable size to be joined together. He the remodeled each of the wheels of the carriage and the horse with gimmick customization to make them move on their own.

Although he was able to see the motion of the objects within the game screen that usually showed the schematics of the customized object, there was no practical use for

such customization. However, although it was just an entertainment function in the game, the customization that made the wheels move on their own was actually a pretty advanced feature in this world.

“This actually has a lot of potential.” (Yuusuke)

It was impossible to make the items perform complex movements, but several simple movements could be joined together. Yuusuke also added an on/off switch, like the one used in the elevators, for his convenience and he imagined his room overflowing with high tech gadgets while he was doing that.

One of the limits of this customization was that the speed of movement could not be reset once the customization was complete. Yet it might be too dangerous for a vehicle to be moving too fast.

“Yuusuke! Are you awake? Whoa! What is that?” (Violet)

“… is it befitting of a princes to openly show her surprise like that?” (Yuusuke)

Violet barged into Yuusuke’s room as she usually did, kicking the door flying open without knocking… and froze in amazement as she saw a toy carriage running in circles atop of Yuusuke’s bed.

Divine arts craftsman could also create items that could move on their own, however for a wooden horse to display such vivid motions and move at the speed of a person, walking at a fast pace, was something the princess saw for the first time in her life.

“That scared me, I thought I saw a ghost.” (Violet)

“Why did you think of a ghost?” (Yuusuke)

“Uhm… actually —“ (Violet)

Violet began telling Yuusuke about her real reason of barging into his room as she picked up the moving toy and closely inspected it.

There were rumors of a ghost crawling out of the underground city of Sanc Adiet every night. (TN: for explanation on underground city read chapter 4) The rumors remained rumors for a while, however recently additional rumors emerged about hearing human wails or children disappearing between the sunset and the dawn.

There were also stories about a person dressed in old style clothes that enters an alleyway with no exit only to disappear there.

“So Sanc Adiet has a ghost problem?” (Yuusuke)

“That’s right, however as the rumor has not been confirmed yet, the knights have not yet been ordered to deal with the issue.” (Violet)

“So, you came to me to do an investigation on it?” (Yuusuke)

“That’s right~” (Violet)

Nodding, Violet showed a thrilled smile. At least it seemed that the ghost was not of an

aggressive kind.

“So, this is a dispatchment order for the darkness god corps!” (Violet)

“Yeah, yeah~” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke carelessly replied to Violet and headed towards the corps common room.

Violet followed Yuusuke for a while until she got caught by Krielov, who took her away telling her that it was time for her studies. Apparently, Violet had tried to use this issue for the sake of running away from her duties.

***

“A ghost you say? I remember that there were rumors several years ago about a voice that could be heard in places without humans.” (Shaheed?)

“That reminds me, I have heard of some rumors similar to that in the middle class district.” (Fonke)

“There were certainly rumors like that some time ago. Whether it is a ghost or not, that might be the cause of this rumor.” (Vermeer)

“I haven’t heard much about it in the commoner or the artless districts, but… those that went to the middle class district for their cleanup duties have certainly mentioned having heard such rumors.” (Isotta)

When Yuusuke talked to his subordinates in the meeting room, it seemed that everyone in the darkness god corps have at least heard of this rumor once. Soldiers from the other corps also seemed to have heard one thing or another about the ghost, especially those who had been living in the middle class district.

“So, middle class district it is? What about you, Aisha, have you heard anything about it?” (Yuusuke)

“Eh?! I-I am not interested… in these kind of things so…” (Aisha)

Somehow Aisha’s reaction was very obvious. Yuusuke, not wanting to push further, continued on in a gentle voice.

“Then let’s start by going out into the city and checking the places where the voice was heard at.” (Yuusuke)

Having inspected the entire city structure in his customization menu, Yuusuke expected that the origin of the voice would be a breeze flowing through crevices and cracks between the surface and the underground portion of the city.

[“It’s the sound of the wind or echo of the voices of people talking somewhere else.”] (Yuusuke)

“Aisha, do you want to remain on standby?” (Yuusuke)

“N-no! I am alright, I’ll go with you!” (Aisha)

“Is that so? Well I don’t believe that it would be something silly like an unnatural

phenomenon. Most likely it's just a natural event that got blown up by people's imagination and fear." (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was thinking that it is not necessary to push yourself if one is overtaken by fear, but the diligent Aisha could not allow herself to forfeit her duties due to personal reasons and made Yuusuke change his mind. The youth, remembering his life in modern japan and basing hit logic on scientific facts, believed that there was nearly no chance that an actual ghost was the cause for this rumor and tried his best to calm Aisha down, but… (TN: Yuusuke pls… you are in an alternate world, had your soul stolen from your body, and now you tell us that there are no ghosts??? Give us a cute little Japanese version of Lily, pretty please~)

"Ghosts are attracted to water arts, right? All the night singers that claimed to have seen the ghosts were water arts users, moreover they were of healing type." (Fonke)

"?!!" (Aisha)

Fonke once again brought up chaos in a glorious manner.

Aisha and Shaheed, Vermeer and Fonke. Having formed the groups, the members left towards the middle class district to investigate the sources of the rumors. In the meantime, Yuusuke, following Isotta's intel, descended down to the commoner district to talk with the artless that had heard these rumors while performing their cleaning duties.

"You seem to be unfazed by ghosts?" (Yuusuke)

"I… I am used to hearing various sounds." (Isotta)

"I-is that so?" (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke thought that a communication type wind arts user was hearing a lot more "voices" than other people, was what Isotta meant when she said that. However, the "voices" were not limited to that, and wind arts users could also hear presences similar to human voices when inspecting murder (crime) scenes.

In this echo, strong emotions and feelings were imprinted in the voices, making this echo to be something like thoughts imprinted in the space/air. When Isotta froze when her comrades opened the gates to the basement of the Gearhawk fortress, it was because she heard the echoes that were pleading for death.

Isotta's face became dim after she answered and Yuusuke gently stroked girl's green hair.

"I seem to have made you remember bad memories, sorry." (Yuusuke) (TN: he said that as a fact, but it looked better to me with uncertainty)

"N-no please don't worry about it." (Isotta)

Isotta's face became red, her fingers twitching as she struggled to force the words out. Realizing it was bad to stroke the head of a girl around Isotta's age, Yuusuke lifted his hand. Thus, enveloped in an delicate air around them, the captain of the darkness god corps and his subordinate walked through the commoner district towards the place where the artless lived.

“Uhhm, Yuusuke has sure become popular with women lately, right?” (Violet)

“Princess, your tutor is waiting for you. Please worry about the investigation of the undercity later.” (Krielov)

Violet was spying on the investigation through a telescope, similar to those in the Deernook fortress that was bearing the mark of the darkness god corps, from a terrace at the upper floor of the palace where she reluctantly stepped down and returned to the room.

***

Darkness god corps members started putting together the information on the rumors of the voices, which they had collected in the morning. It seemed that the voices were most often heard in the upper part of the middle class district, mainly inhabited by the earth arts users. Afterwards, they concentrated on investigating the alleyways where suspicious figures were said to have disappeared in.

“It seems to be a wonderful place. Has no one really gone to investigate it?” (Fonke)

“Well, ordinary people would not try to approach such place” (Shaheed)

It was a place close to the upper class district that was abandoned when the wall of the upper class district became higher, blocking off all sunlight. Ruins of a mansion stood there, abandoned in the alleyway close to the huge wall. Surrounded by a narrow alleyway from both sides, the area imposed an oppressive atmosphere.

Having been bad enough when sunlight still reached the place, now one could not see the end of the passage even during the day, as it was surrounded by perpetual darkness.

“You said that there were reports of missing children. Weren’t there any requests to investigate this place?” (Aisha?)

“Eee, it seems … to have been written off as rumors.” (Vermeer) (TN: uhm… wat? OO)

“… So you want to search for them…” (Fonke)

“!!” (Aisha)

Aisha asked Yuusuke about the reason for investigating this place and if there was any information, such as damage reports. Fonke answered her in a ghost-like voice that there might be a single source that is the cause of the rumors. (TN: I am sure the original text had a different meaning) The guy used this as a pretense to scare Aisha even more.

“If I wanted to search myself, I would go out into the city night after night…” (Fonke)

“H-hey, you have gone too far.” (Isotta)

“Fonke, stop fooling around!” (Vermeer)

“Fuhihi, I’m sorry~” (Fonke)

Disappointed, Yuusuke let out a light sigh. Currently he was investigating the map data of the alleyway and the area surrounding it in his customization menu. As they finally stated their designated duties, he was silently watching his subordinates.

“Nn?” (Yuusuke)

“Di-did you notice something?” (Aisha)

“There seems to be a shaft at the side of the alley.” (Yuusuke)

“A shaft? You mean a passageway to the underground?” (Vermeer)

During his inspection of the map data, Yuusuke found a gaping hole that connected to the underground, right around the corner of the alleyway. It led to the interior of a building that was buried after the former city level was abandoned. There were a lot of passages of the former living quarters like that, which were abandoned as they were. (TN: without being buried)

These buildings were different from the Volance palace that was built level upon level at the same place. The buildings of the residential areas were scattered through the different levels thus creating a maze that was even more complex than that of the palace.

Vermeer, was casting the fire art providing the group with light to proceed towards the direction of the entrance to the passage. Forcing their way through the overgrown, unattended bushes at the side of the alleyway, they found the entrance and a rope ladder that stretched down into the darkness.

“It doesn’t look that old to me…” (Fonke)

“There are clear signs of someone having come here recently.” (Yuusuke’s corps member)

“Maybe it’s some kind of fellow that is living underground?” (Yuusuke’s corps member)

“But then the rumors about hearing human voices, can they be…” (Yuusuke’s corps member)

There was a possibility that people above ground could be hearing voices of other people talking below ground. Because the layer separating the two “floors“ was thin here, there was a decent probability that people above ground could hear the voices from below ground if they were loud enough.

“Hmmm… For the time being, let’s climb down and check.” (Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke and his corps were debating about their course of action in front of the hole with the rope ladder in the abandoned alleyway, the city was slowly changing into its evening colors.

Chapter 33: Ghost of the middle class district (Part 2)

Aisha and Shaheed were left above ground as Vermeer, Fonke, Isotta and Yuusuke started descending into the basement. A rope ladder was used due to it's reliability.

The pit hole was about 1 meter wide, surrounded by thick cobblestone. Under the ground it looked like a buried old mansion's room's ceiling.

"Apparently, this hole seems to be man-made."(Vermeer)

Vermeer led the way so as to ensure that there was enough light around where we were walking and he pointed out the places where there were potholes on the stone pavements. Unexpectedly, the hole looked like it was naturally caved-in, but somehow there was parts of a rope ladder around the place, and one could speculate that this hole was probably made in this location.

Although the town is made up of stones reinforced through earth arts, it is not difficult to drill by force using the same kind of earth arts. Of course, it is against the law to drill a hole without prior notification to the department that manages the city.

"Maybe a Blue garden's spy who was lurking around had dropped into it?"(Fonke)

"....indeed, it doesn't seem impossible."(Yuusuke)

"Hiii….., the second coming of Gearhawk Fortress…."(Isotta)

The place where Yuusuke and his gang landed looked like a corridor of the filled up part of an old mansion. A stairs leading down was visible ahead of them, as it seemed like they were on the corridor that was either the 2nd or higher floor. As a matter of fact, since Vermeer's flame arts was the only light source, the light could not reach places that were in total darkness.

The cold musty air, which felt so nostalgic.

"Isotta, are there any human presences around?"(Yuusuke)

"There isn't anyone around…..ah, but, half a day ago…...someone, passed through here."(Isotta)

"Hmmm……"(Yuusuke)

He immediately opened his customization menu to examine the structure of the house, it seemed like the whole house has been reinforced with stone to become one of the pillars for the city above. Seemingly, one could move around this indoor passage, and along the hallway there was only one stairway leading down further underground.

"It seems like one straight path. For the time being, let's move out. Fonke, movement speed increase."(Yuusuke)

"Roger that."(Fonke)

They began heading deeper into the old underground mansion, as they came to the decision to check the place to a certain extent first and later discuss on the number of

people they will bring tomorrow.

While descending the stairs, a large and open room, like an entrance hallway, could be seen. It seems that one of the corridors which extends to both sides was sealed up, with only white cloudy windows and the surfaces of stones could be seen. So they began to proceed down the corridor which wasn't blocked towards the stairway that descended further down into the darkness.

"What's up, Isotta?"

".....There isn't people around the area, but there are sounds….of footsteps at a distance. I am not sure of it myself…..."(Isotta)

Yuusuke used his customization menu to confirm whether there wasn't any kind of trap planted and at that rate, they slowly descended deeper underground, at the end of the stairs was what looked like a garden in ruins.

The once wide space would have been spread out with a green lawn, which now had dried up grass, and rows of gigantic pillars which seemed to continue on forever. It was a magnificent sight.

"This is amazing!"

"Once upon a time, this place seemed to be located in the noble district."

The large building had been integrated with a huge support pillar of the city above, although it seems that smaller buildings have been left intact between the pillars.

By opening his customization menu, Yuusuke was able to locate his current location in the vicinity. Not only that, he is able to escape this place by using the skill instant movement. Having his concern of escaping settled, Isotta began searching for signs of people through her wind arts, as they then proceeded forward towards the back of the pillars.

Along the way, there were places that were submerged underwater, using his customized skill, Yuusuke created scaffolding to the opposite side, although there was one small boat at the location.

"Ah…..there is someone nearby!.....It feels like the earth arts wave."(Isotta)

"Like I expected, it was an earth arts user…...the boat just now was made out of earth arts, and most probably it's just for the use of one person."(Vermeer)

"So does that mean it might be the same person who drilled the hole?"

As there is only one boat that was lurking around, Vermeer came to the conclusion that there wasn't anyone else. It seems that the person who had created the hole was someone who is able to use manufacturing earth arts. Incidentally, although one can reinforce materials by increasing the hardness, they can also cause it to become brittle if their process is reversed, and there are a lot of architects who could use these manufacturing earth arts.

Just to be safe, Yuusuke prepared a defence wall stance, as Isotta points out the location where she will be calling out to.

"OOOOIIIII, IS THERE ANYONE OVER THERE!!!!"(Isotta)

".....who is it?"(man)

Just ahead of them, a vigilant voice of a man sounded out without showing his face. For the time being, Vermeer became the representative to negotiate with him. He began explaining that they were from the soldier corps and since they were being told that a suspicious hole was found in the alleyway of the city, they had come to investigate. And then ~~

"Wa,What! Soldier Corps? Wait a moment, I am not a suspicious person."(man)

The owner of the voice was followed by the sound of hasty footsteps, where he showed his face from the windows of the building in between the pillars. That place seem to be the entrance/exit, as the middle-age yellow hair man came out from it.

"Halt, your name and affiliation, and why you are here."(Vermeer)

"I-I am from the middle class district, working at an accessories shop manufacturing for them. My name is Sorzak, this is my hobby to come and examine the histories of the city."(Sorzak)

He seems to be aware that it was illegal to open a hole without permission, as he fearfully answers Vermeer's interrogation. Looking at his appearance, Yuusuke tilted his head in confusion, as he tries to remember where he had seen him before.

"Ng, where did I see this person……"(Yuusuke)

"Captain?"(Vermeer)

In the dark, Sorzak was not aware of the existence of the person until Vermeer's lights shone onto Yuusuke. When he saw Yuusuke's appearance, he showed a shocked expression and involuntarily let out his voice, "AH!"

"You….the black hair youth who was with Mr. Zeshald!"(Sorzak)

"Ng? Ah I Remembered! You are the person I saw when I came to the city for the first time."(Yuusuke)

It was during the time when Violet exposed Yuusuke's black hair by burning his hood, as she had suspected he was the evil god. Due to that, the fire god corps were causing an uproar, thus Zeshald began explaining his findings about the legends of the evil god and it's shrine, this middle aged man was the person who wanted to hear more about it.

Prior to their meeting, he had already been going underground, spending his days researching the old city structures.Thus, he did not know that Yuusuke was appointed as the leader of the Darkness God corps and Zeshald's returned from a recent infiltration mission in Blue garden..

It seemed that he had been surfacing only to shop for food when it is exhausted, only to dive back underground to continue his daily research.

Thus he became the rumored, "suspicious person with old-fashioned looking clothes",

as he was wearing an old design of clothes that had been sold a few decades ago.

Incidentally, the funds for research was acquired when one day all of a sudden, there stood a indistinguishable sightseeing tower and many merchants were recruiting manufacturers of earth arts to make souvenirs of the tower. It was there where he obtained his funds through participating in it. Thus he striked it rich.

“Old buildings, things of rare architectural style. It is so fun studying the old buildings of the previous era, located on an old map.”(Sorzak)

“Well…..It’s good to do research, but if you do a proper report, it’s very troubling.”

“Okay, at least that explains that you are not a suspicious person. Next time, listen to what people have to say….”

“Is there any other curious researchers that came down here other than uncle?”

So the identity of the ghost in the alley was just a hobby researcher, as the daunting Vermeer began to loosen up, he prompted Yuusuke and Fonke for their opinion of who was beside him and about ”the identity of the voices”, while Sorzak pointed out to him, ”isn’t that because of the city children?”

“This place is on the opposite side of the district, now it is a place with a no longer used drainage system underground.”(Sorzak)

“What’s that? I haven’t heard about this story before.”(Vermeer)

This huge city with a long history, even the soldiers from the department that were managing the city doesn’t know of such places and problems that Sorzak had just mentioned.

“For example, the ghetto slum in the conspicuous location? In the commoner district, where the divine arts users live, the presence of such place was being allowed.”

“Isn’t that good, now tell us about all the underground entrances you know of.”(Vermeer)

Vermeer had no intentions to notify this to the administrators of the city, as he requested information about the locations of the problematic areas. Without a moment of delay, Sorzak realized that it poses a matter of trespassing and condones to the information.

“.....well, that is all?”(Sorzak)

“Yea, isn’t that good. It will be hard to examine everything anyways.”(Vermeer)

So what now? As Vermeer turned his eyes towards Yuusuke while waiting for him to issue an answer of permission. That means that if Sorzak were to find something which would cause serious problems as he examines the underground city, he could approach the palace knight’s captain to deal with the problem in discretion.

After Yuusuke and his gang obtained the information, once they reached the street level, they were to dispatch people to locations where there were problems. On a later date, an appropriate policy to apply for this mission will be made for the architecture

craftsmen.

“Wow, I didn’t realize, I was mistaken for a ghost….”(Sorzak)

Based on Sorzak story, there were people who had settled down in a place where it was a relatively shallow layer. It was also a place where field singers* uses it for business. There were animals that were being kept underground as some of the children’s family didn’t allow pets at home, thus it became a playground for them. There were also bird livestocks which seemed to have escaped from the farm and ended up here. While he was explained about it, a bunch of feathers flew pass by them.

The round shaped appearance, which was distinctive to a bird livestock. It could have wandered in here through a small hole.

“Well, in any case it will be tomorrow. And this will dispel the rumor of the spector.”

“Alrighty, ah when we get back let’s have grilled chicken.”

“But, to vacate those people who have settled in the basement….I am not sure whether to dispute on it.”

“That’s just great, we could make use of those idling young lads of the guardhouse to do some work.”

The tension from descending into the underground lair was no longer there, as the bunch of darkness god crops became like self-indulgence researchers while chatting along the way up towards the street level. When they reached the street, it was already dusk as the night sky was twinkling with stars.

“Mooh! Captain is terrible, you didn’t even try to contact once….”(Aisha)

“.....I’m tired.”(Shaheed)

While Yuusuke and his gang went down underground, Aisha was forced to wait in the eerie dark alley, and in order to draw her attention away from the fear, she had been garrulity to Shaheed, thus Shaheed became completely exhausted.

After the identity of the ghost was explained to Aisha, she immediately began nagging and preaching Sorzak.

“Now now, because he is able to improve the town problem area, just forgive him.”(Yuusuke)

“Captain….I understood, I will follow what captain has judged.”(Aisha)

“Kukuku, it definitely is very frightening, I say.”(Fonke)

“Fonke!”(Aisha)

Using his movement speed increase wind arts, Fonke escaped from Aisha who was flushed red in anger. Yuusuke and his gang began laughing at the lukewarm sight of the usual comedy duo. Sorzak, who felt uncomfortable with the current state, observed the members of the darkness god corp with a curious look.

The reason he felt uncomfortable with the darkness god corp was a strange feeling that didn’t exist with the other soldier corps, an intimate communication which ignores the differences in the hierarchy of the gods.

In the general populace, it is an often sight, but for a royal knight captain to have done this, it felt thoroughly out of place.

“The captain of the darkness god corps, is it because he is special, or……”(Sorzak)

Around this time, at the observation tower which height exceeds the palace in the commoner district, the appearance of many [Artless] working around the city could be seen compared to previously. A change in Sanc Adiet could be felt.

Although Sorzak was disinterested with the trends of the world, he could feel that the darkness god corps will change the trend of the times.

Currently there isn’t a good enough punch line. * field singers = non-registered prostitutes, mostly [Artless]*

Chapter 34: The short peace

“What? In the end the rumors of the ghost were just a researcher and the works of children?”(Violet)

“It worked well while it lasted. This is the identity of such rumors.” (Yuusuke)

“Boring~~ But It’s still pretty interesting to have a city underground, should we go try exploring the basement of the palace now?”(Violet)

“The basement of the palace huh….”(Yuusuke)

A few days after solving the specter commotion, Yuusuke was currently holed up in his room after he had finished his patrolling duties in the commoner district. He began experimenting on the gimmick function specification on some crap items, for the purpose of testing them. Violet was currently hanging around in his room, as she leisurely enjoyed their silly conversation time.

The location of Yuusuke’s mansion was decided, and all that’s left is to wait for it to be built. Although Yuusuke could have built it himself, but due to various circumstances he had let the earth arts architects work hard on it.

The talks between Blue Garden’s Queen Risha and King Esvobus had been planned to be carried out in the next 2 or 3 days at Deernook fortress. The officials who had attended the meeting realised that they had misjudged the power of Yuusuke, due to the sheer size and profoundness of the Deernook fortress.

They began advising the King to place on Yuusuke the burden and responsibility of a post in the expansion development branch of the city. These bureaucrats who had underestimated the presence of Yuusuke from the beginning of the establishment of the Darkness God Corps, don’t they feel shy to even make such a move after so long, even though it was difficult, as Violet is a wall that will constrain them.

The fiance candidates who don’t play much of an active role in Yuusuke’s activity, wanted to successfully control him with Hivodir’s cooperation. Since Yuusuke’s position hasn’t changed at all, thus he goes about doing his daily peace, like going to the commoner district to mingle with them and providing companionship to Violet.

It’s also one of the reasons he wanted to construct his own home. With Violet wanting to selfishly monopolize and hog Yuusuke being the main reason.

“Hey Yuusuke, are you able to make a large scale version of this?”(Violet)

Violet was playing and toying around with the experimental figurines which was made to move. She could be seen pulling and tugging the string which was attached to the favorite experimental figure. Her favorite was a “Flying saucer”. In the middle of the disk-shaped body was 4 holes opening, inside the openings were built in wings that rotates.

The Radio-controlled Airplane was amongst the things Yuusuke had seen in his original world, so he tried reproducing it into a disc-shaped like aircraft which was able to hover in mid air. Thus saying that, it has been swaying left and right while floating in the air.

Violet who had taken a liking to this unusual saucer which was floating in the air, placed a string on it and brought it around. As it was also pretty cooling as it floated above her head. (TL notes: LOL portable fan | ED: I wished it just followed me around while cooling me off haha)

"I don't think it's possible. Is it's impossible to ride something like this though? There are alot of unknown dangers."(Yuusuke)

"Fuee, how about that thing over there, with wheels that are spinning without a puller?"(Violet)

"Currently, it is a ongoing research, it's in the testing phase for baggages."(Yuusuke)

"Whoa! How does it work? Can it carry a person?"(Violet)

Although, through the gimmick feature the pull cart of the wheels was moving, it became stuck the moment a baggage was placed on it. As it seems, motion could only be granted as a gimmick feature from the start, and when an extensive load was applied to it, it would come to a halt.

Therefore, by adding a heavy object's weight before granting the rotation motion in order to supply enough power to the wheels, it allowed the ability to grant enough resistance to weight for the movement of the wheel itself, after that, removing the weight limit will allow an increase in power.

"It's a troublesome procedure, however the reverse has a higher safety."(Yuusuke)

No matter the cause, there should be a method to stop it no matter what, in case of causing a tragic accident.

"An accident that could be caused by a runaway carriage?"(Violet)

"Well, for example…..having a hair caught in the rotation of the propeller ~~"(Yuusuke)

After pointing out that hair standing accidents that could happen, Violet began to worry needlessly about the thing above her head.

"That's a scary thing to say."(Violet)

"Well, first I need to find a method to safely use them without a risk of such accidents occurring."(Yuusuke)

While playfully teasing Violet lightly, Yuusuke placed the completed mini automatic cart on the floor.

The entire length was about 50cm long, the width was about 40cm wide and the 4 wheels were around 30cm in diameter. He began applying the rotation motion onto the rear weights with added a weight load, on the cart was a rod-like shaped handle which was an ON/OFF switch.

"Now then, will it move?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke boarded the mini automatic cart and sat in a cross-legged position, after which he began the motion of switching it on while Violet was watching in anticipation. The

vibration of an attempted rotation was transmitted to his butt.

“.....”

“.....”

The cart which was carrying Yuusuke, did not even flinch.

“Nothing happened right?”

“Hmmm”

Realising his experiment had failed due to his body weight, Yuusuke tried to step out of the vehicle, and the moment the weight was reduced due to one of his legs, the mini cart began moving forward. It was an amusing sight as he immediately tripped and fell while failing to get off onto the ground, so he reached for the motion OFF switch.

“So the load resistance for the wheels isn’t enough…”(Yuusuke)

“Now, let me ride it too.”(Violet)

Yuusuke began to think that it might move slightly if the person was a little lighter than him. While saying so, Violet happily got onto the mini automatic cart. He taught her how to steer and turn the motion switch ON. (TL notes: The author seems to wanna emphasize the ON and OFF)

“OHH!”(Violet)

“Ah, it’s was really because of the weight.”(Yuusuke)

“Goro Goro” was the sound of the wooden wheel moving along the stone floor. The mini cart was moving at a rate of a normal person walking slowly with Violet in it. Violet, who was in high spirits, tried to move towards to opened the room door and was immediately stopped by Yuusuke.

“Wait a minute, are you trying to go down the hallway in that manner.”(Yuusuke)

“Eh, don’t stop me Yuusuke, I want to go down this hallway like this.”(Violet)

Since it is a small cart and she was not sitting cross legged, her pants were in full view from the front.

“Even though you are a tomboyish princess, going out like that you will surely find your dedicated guard and trainer, Krielov, become a nagging hurricane.”(Yuusuke)

“Uuu…. there’s no choice then.”(Violet)

Reluctantly, Violet put up with driving around in circles around the room. Recently, Yuusuke had became softer towards her.

“At any rate, I made a kind of motor. See here, it’s a kind of transmission mechanism gear box that I hastily made.”(Yuusuke)

“Hmm, I have no idea what you said….as long as it is needed it is good, just make it as fast as possible.”(Violet)

An item that was too flashy was made, as the initial prospect of it was being used as a strength to suppress the fight at Paula, but now it was too late for it to become a force. In order to dodge the bureaucracy speculation, he decided to leave the structure architecture to someone else, thus allowing Yuusuke to have free reign in making anything in his own time.

This is the first creation, calculations will be needed to be made from the vehicle image for the required amount of materials needed to create a complete vehicle.

"First I think it should be created according to an amusement park go kart level."(Yuusuke)

Balloon-like items that are filled with helium air, with strings attached to it that will float fluffily like the "flying saucer". Yuusuke pictured the peaceful sight in his mind as he murmured while watching Violet having fun riding the mini automatic cart.

-- One of the [Artless] villages in Fonclanc had been destroyed --

It was around evening when the urgent message came rushing into the palace.

In a certain food stall where the divine art users frequent, their investment that they have placed in managing the collection of the harvest from the village was lost, as it seems that most of the villagers had been murdered.

From the testimonies of the survivors, they said that soldiers claiming to be from the Gazzetta army began their massacre of the villagers after saying, "those [Artless] whose allegiance isn't with Gazzetta are all enemies."

Immediately a group of investigation teams were dispatched, and as soon as the bureaucrats and royal knights heard about it, they went back home to check their personnel assets of [Artless] villagers that they had owned by getting in contact to those who run it for them. Thus, the palace suddenly became noisy.

The meeting with Blue Garden was held back, as King Esvobus was cautious of whether the information was leaked, thus they were waiting for the report from the investigation team. The intelligence troops that was in the city were gathering the rumors standing out among the people and being vigilant.

"Really!….peace doesn't last long."

Yuusuke was currently waiting at the carriage pouch of the palace with the Darkness god corps members, to leave for the Village of Rufk in a haste to pick up Sun. As most of the carriages had been sent out, Violet had arranged a royal carriage which was for the official's use.

"Thanks for lending out a hand, Violet."(Yuusuke)

"This isn't much, quickly go pick up Sun."(Violet)

"Preparations for Movement Assist Completed!"

“Captain, we can move off now.”

Compared to the normal carriages, it could bring out the full support systems of the wind and water arts. Vermeer was lighting the way, and sitting beside him was Shaheed with the reins as the coachman, Fonke was engulfing the carriage with a film of wind, while Aisha was continuously recovering the strength of the horse.

Isotta was currently on standby for any emergency contacts of information emanating from the palace, Yuusuke on the other hand was relaxing while entrusting the journey to them.

“Gazzetta’s soldiers…… is it Shinha’s instigation…?”(Yuusuke)

The royal carriage that was carrying the Darkness God Corps ran along the night on the single highway which led to Rufk Village.

_____

Author notes: This chapter has been shortened, but it represents an opening of a new stage/arc.

Chapter 35: Midnight Rumble

When Yuusuke's group arrived at Rufk, night had already fallen. According to the villagers, an armed group, calling itself the Gazzetta army, was exercising force around here. As a defensive measure, the fire was lit at the bottom of the protective ditch and older men were put on guard duties.

"Teacher!" (Yuusuke)

"Mhm, so you came after all, Yuusuke." (Zeshald)

Zeshald predicted that Yuusuke, worrying about Sun, would come to Rufk straight away to pick her up.

Sun had already finished packing up, so Yuusuke planned to leave for the city straight away after picking her up, but agreeing to hear Zeshald's opinion about the recent events, they decided to rest and talk for a little bit.

Despite it being late, Bahana came to Zeshald's house and presented them with a late night fried meal which everyone enjoyed while Belushya, still unaccustomed to tasks like that, was just drinking her tea.

"What do you think about the current situation, Yuusuke?" (Zeshald)

"He (Shinha) seems to be trying to gather all the artless of the world in one place, but it seems to be having the opposite effect." (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was drinking his tea as he continued, "Though he does not look like an idiot who could not see that." Sun giggled at the way Yuusuke put it.

Zeshald also thought that this attack was not ordered by Shinha, but that did not answer the question if the armed group was or was not related to the Gazzetta army. Thus there was a possibility of another influential group acting within Gazzetta.

"Whichever way it is, the damage is already done, so it will not be brushed off as a trivial matter." (Zeshald/Yuusuke)

"I guess so…" (Zeshald/Yuusuke)

For the time being, emergency measures were under effect and palace knights were sent to the villages in contact with Sanc Adiet, to help with the village defense. At this stage it was not yet decided if king Esvobus would send an official protest to Gazzetta regarding these attacks.

After the rest, Yuusuke's subordinates started preparations for the trip back to the city, while Yuusuke presented Zeshald with the bracelets and rings that he made. They were made from the leftover materials from what was used to create the sacred treasure, which was turned over to Blue Garden. Despite that, their power was roughly a third of the said treasure.

"As Rufk is getting an exceptional treatment, I believe the reinforcements for the village had been arranged. Still, take these just in case." (Yuusuke)

“Hoo… these again. Hm, thank you, I will use them.” (Zeshald)

Zeshald passed one pair of accessories to Belushya. The accessories that Zeshald kept for himself increased the divine arts and physical powers while Belushya’s increased respective resistances of their wearer. Both rings also had healing and poison resistance effects.

“A matching pair, eh?” (Yuusuke)

“Hmm, what is?” (Zeshald)

“It’s nothing,” laughing it off like that, Yuusuke started walking back towards the carriage that was preparing for the departure.

“Sun, take this with you?” (Bahana)

“Is it really alright, Bahana obaa-san?” (Sun, unintentional shots fired?)

Bahana had come before Zeshald’s house and presented Sun with a handmade bow.

Actually that should have been of little surprise as Sun was learning how to use the bow from Bahana these last few days. She had no troubles drawing the bowstring with the support of the ring of strength. If she continued to target practice like that, she would be able to become proficient enough to be a hunter.

“Giving such an item to me…” (Sun)

“Yes, I thought you would be able to help Yuusuke a little bit with it.” (Bahana)

Sun was still worried that she would be a burden for Yuusuke, so she wanted to learn some sort of fighting skill. However, this very thought made Yuusuke uneasy, as seeing Sun standing beside him in a battle was beyond his comprehension.

Yet that made him realize that he was wrong in treating Sun as a weak existence, in need of protection, and made him want to support the girl’s determination from now on.

“But I can barely hit the target right now.” (Sun)

“Hmm… Let me see that bow for a second.” (Yuusuke)

He confirmed in the customization menu that he had received [Bahana’s bow]. It was a common, yet sturdily made wooden bow.

As the rarity level of the bow was low, the customizations he could perform on it was also limited. As he could not enchant ease of use effects like he did for Shinha’s great sword (T.N. I think, author means stamina recovery/attack speed here), he had to settle with an accuracy increasing buff. As the customization completed, the beads of light surrounding the bow, had also disappeared.

“How does it feel now?” (Yuusuke)

“Eeeeto? (ehm…)” (Sun)

Sun tilted her head slightly as she received the bow. Urged by Yuusuke to shoot at

whatever target she could spot, Bahana told her "Why not shoot a fruit over there?", as she pointed at a rara fruit tree that was growing near the cattle shed. Sun, despite thinking that it was impossible for her to even hit the tree, not to mention a fruit growing on it, still nocked the arrow and aimed the bow towards the tree.

["Wow… it seems so stable."] (Sun)

Sun could clearly see the fruit she was aiming at, feeling that her aim was steady.

As she released the arrow, it precisely pierced the fruit, plucked it off the branch, and embedded itself in the wall of the shed. Mooph that were lying by the side of the shed were scared by the unexpected sound. After looking around restlessly for a while, they saw the rara fruit and started happily chewing off it. (T.N. and you just avoided becoming hamburger by that much too…)

"Oh, I actually hit it!" (Sun)

"Heee, amazing. Yuusuke's power is sure something." (Bahana)

"I merely slightly increased the accuracy of the weapon." (Yuusuke)

Although Yuusuke said it nonchalantly, for someone with skills comparable to Sun's to hit a fruit on a relatively far off tree, especially during the night was an impossible feat.

"Captain, with this you could make a group of trainees with cheap bow's rival a troop of skilled soldiers." (Shaheed)

"Gazzetta would sure desire that." (Fonke)

Although Shaheed and the rest of the darkness god corps had received similarly enhanced weapons from Yuusuke, looking objectively, they were yet again faced with the potential of this divine art.

"Then, contact me immediately if something happens" (Yuusuke)

"Uhm. Stay alert even if you are at the city" (Zeshald)

"Take care of Sun properly!" (Bahana)

"Leave it to me!" (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke departed from the village, seen off by Zeshald and everyone else, thinking that he would buy a good bow for Sun as a present sometime in the future. The palace carriage, carrying the party of the darkness god corps, was running on the highway under the darkness of the night. (T.N. Cmooon, you are a captain and a god/apostle…. Just customize some over enchanted composite bow instead of thinking, everyone here wants to see Sun kicking some ass…)

"Well then, let us go to rest as well." (Zeshald)

"… yes." (Bahana)

"I wonder if teacher will inform the city about this?" (Bahana)

"I'm a retired person with an old body. I will not be contacting them this late."

(Zeshald)

In simple terms, Zeshald, who preferred a life in the village, Bahana, and the old men who were on lookout nearby, all felt a wave of relief. For Zeshald this village was something that he could not live without.

["However, the situation this time is serious and will not go unnoticed by Esvobus. What will you do from now on, Yuusuke?"] (Zeshald)

***

— Late at night

The carriage with the darkness god corps party had safely arrived at Sanc Adiet and passed the first gate.

The city was silent, as if it was deserted, as all of the city folk was sleeping in their beds. There were lights here and there that were mostly emitted by the overnight bars and brothels. Only around these parts could they spot a figure or two of someone moving in the shadows.

"The city… feels kind of sad during the night." (Sun)

That was the impression that the slightly drowsy Sun had of the nighttime view of Sanc Adiet. Yuusuke agreed that the difference between the daytime and nighttime city was excessively large.

When Yuusuke's party arrived at the palace, the carriage boarding area was brightly lit despite that it was late at night. As the knight's carriages and private carriages were continuously coming and leaving, this place alone did not sleep.

"It's so noisy." (Someone from the party)

"As expected, after all a village was destroyed." (Someone from the party)

The damage this time was different from the provocateur attacks that Blue Garden employed before. As there were no evidence pointing to Gazzetta aside from survivors testimonies, palace officials were busy gathering the information.

"Yo, Yuusuke" (Hivodir)

"Hivodir?" (Yuusuke)

Having gotten off the carriage, Yuusuke's party met Hivodir, clad in the usual fire god corps uniform along with his servant at the entrance to the palace. The way he presented himself was truly fitting for an aristocrat. It seemed he was ordered to go and inspect the villages that were owned by the Volace family.

"Wouldn't the villagers be sleeping this late into the night?" (Yuusuke)

"I am ordered to station the soldiers in the village. Villagers will have to deal with it."(Hivodir)

"There are talks about the increase of the number of active military personnel, these

late night inspections serve as an implication for the discussions," explained Hivodir about the purpose of the late night dispatchment.

"Thus, I am in a hurry. Good bye." (Hivodir)

"Wait a minute." (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke tried to stop Hivodir, who was about to board a carriage with a Volace family crest on it and for no specific reason had decided to customize the mantle that Hivodir was using as his casual clothing.

Although it was a common uniform of the palace corps, it seemed that it would be able to provide special effects to the wearer. Without hesitation Yuusuke endowed it with the healing effect.

Enveloped by the light effects, the mantle fell off (unequipped) Hivodir's back.

"Hmm? My mantle… what the hell did you do to it?" (Hivodir)

"I just… added something like a protective charm on it…" (Yuusuke)

Although Hivodir did not understand what Yuusuke meant by that, he took the mantle from Yuusuke, who was holding it, saying "Don't worry about it," and put it on again. Afterwards he boarded the carriage and left the Volance palace.

"With this, everyone is off duty for now." (Yuusuke)

"Thank you very much, captain." (Shaheed)

"Yaaaawn, I'm sleepy~~~" (Fonke)

"We will take turns in resting." (Vermeer)

Separating from Vermeer's group, Yuusuke took Sun along and headed towards the guest room on the fourth floor. Violet had prepared the same room for Sun when she stayed at the palace before, and it seemed that the girl was familiar with the atmosphere of the palace by now and did not feel anxious when visiting the palace for the third time.

"We're here… Then I'll head back towards my room as well." (Yuusuke)

"Okay, uhm… Yuusuke san." (Sun)

Sun was facing Yuusuke in front of her room while clutching the bow that she had received from Bahana close to her chest.

"Good night, Yuusuke san." (Sun)

"Mhm, goodnight, Sun." (Yuusuke)

They exchanged their goodbyes, with somewhat awkward smiles.

Incidentally, although Violet had succumbed to sleep in the carriage boarding place while waiting for their return, she was picked up by Krielov and could not meet them that night.

Chapter 36: Shadow of Conspiracy

The next day, right as Yuusuke was about to leave the room to work, he stumbled upon Violet, who was dragging Sun along with her.

"Oi Yuusuke, are you heading into the city now?" (Violet)

"Mmm, well yeah." (Yuusuke)

"Good morning, Yuusuke san." (Sun)

"Good morning, Sun. You are already being dragged around in the morning, eh?" (Yuusuke)

Having exchanged his greetings with the girls, Yuusuke teased the two girls – Violet, having her [flying plate] attached to a string over her head, and Sun, who's following the princess from behind. Violet was wearing her usual scarlet dress, while Sun was wearing the same white dress she wore the other time she was at the palace.

Violet was not only bringing Sun around because they were friends, but because it also helped her ward off the other fiancé candidates that would swarm her, since Hivodir was out on a mission and Yuusuke had to leave the palace at the same time as well.

"I was thinking of having Sun show off her bow handling skills to me now." (Violet)

"But remember that I am not so skilled as to show off before other people…" (Sun)

Having heard about it from the other members of the darkness god corps, Violet wanted to see the buffs that Sun's bow had bestowed on its users. She wanted to confirm the difference of how the accuracy would increase when compared to shooting from an ordinary bow, as Violet herself was somewhat used to handling a bow.

Thus, while on their way to the knights training grounds, they stopped by Yuusuke's room to finish a certain business.

"That is alright, however can you use such a bow?" (Yuusuke)

"No way, I would like to have easy to move in clothes that I can change into." (Violet)

"That's why we have come to show you our clothing designs," said Violet as she raised her small chest. Next to her, Sun, who was still not used to the clothes, openly displayed her much more pronounced chest, was trying to casually cover it up from Yuusuke.

"Then, the main question is whether you will need extra material, like when you talked about the construction of the Gearhawk fortress—" (Violet) (T.N. did anyone tell her about the equipping part. Part of me hopes, not. Part of me knows that manga is censored.)

There were shops selling high quality thread and cloth in the middle class district, but Yuusuke would have to go and choose materials for customization purposes himself, while presenting the palace with a purchase list.

“The user of the product can purchase materials as well, but it is best for the craftsman himself to procure the needed supplies, right?” (Violet)

“That’s right. In my case, I will not know the quality of the material without touching it first.” (Yuusuke)

It was especially true in Yuusuke’s case. Even if there was no information about the material, after touching it he could ascertain whether it was good or bad in his customization menu.

His customization power’s true strength was modifying objects that were already created, therefore it was difficult to perform a process like purifying iron from a certain amount of iron ore.

“I’m off to the main office, bye.” (Yuusuke)

“I expect you to create the modified vehicle you promised me, before tomorrow.” (Violet)

“Good bye, Yuusuke san.” (Sun)

***

Arriving at the middle class district, Yuusuke immediately started searching for a supply shop belonging to an earth arts user. Compared to the commoner district, the road here was somewhat narrow, but the walls were decorated with various ornaments and the buildings were noticeable bigger.

The amount of passer-by’s was also noticeable smaller and Yuusuke sometimes passed a guard while on his patrol duty. The atmosphere around here was similar to a high class residential area.

“So it’s here, eh?” (Yuusuke)

Passing some buildings resembling shops, Yuusuke arrived at a relatively small material store. While gems and blocks of glass were aligned as sample materials in front of other stores, this one presented itself with lumps of iron blocks before its door. After touching it and inspecting the parameters in the customization menu, Yuusuke ascertained that the quality of iron was pretty good.

“Hello —“ (Yuusuke)

Opening the store door, he heard a familiar chime of a bell that was common in the coffee shops in his world that informed a shopkeeper about a new customer.

“Yeah, yeah welcome to — Ah!!” (Shopkeeper)

“If it isn’t Sorzak san?” (Yuusuke)

***

The owner of the shop was Sorzak, a self-proclaimed researcher they met during the ghost incident.

Since the underground passage was closed, Sorzak gradually lost his spirit and returned to his original occupation of being a shopkeeper. It seemed he had used his remaining funds to buy iron ore, purified it, and started selling it, focusing his business towards blacksmiths.

"Weren't you an accessories craftsman (jeweler?)" (Yuusuke)

"Ah, this was originally my business. I started crafting accessories when the tower craze had started. However, recently the amount of craftsmen increased even more and as it was not as profitable as it was before, I have returned to purifying iron which yields a more stable profit." (Sorzak)

"Hmm, so you are a pretty capable earth arts user then, Sorzak san?" (Yuusuke)

"Although there are probably better craftsmen than me, I will not lose to anyone in Sanc Adiet when it comes to spirit." (Sorzak)

As he said this, the atmosphere about him was not akin to that of a merchant, bragging or bluffing about his feats, but more like one close to that of Zeshald's, of a man confident in his ability. Yuusuke thought for a bit and, when an idea came to his mind, he turned to return to the palace for the time being.

"I'll come back later." (Yuusuke)

"Alright. Come back any time since I don't have anything else to do these days." (Sorzak)

***

As he returned to the palace, Yuusuke went to the training grounds and approached Sun and Violet, who were holding an archery contest. The girls seemed to be on break now and have changed the corps uniforms to some simpler clothes. The girls were sitting at the table, facing each other, and enjoying a cup of tea. (TN: corps uniforms? Do want to see, manga please OO)

"Oh, Yuusuke san?" (Sun)

"Hm? What is it Yuusuke? You are back rather early." (Violet)

"Ehmm, you see, the reason —" (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke told Violet that he returned to consult her about hiring an exceptional earth arts user capable of purifying iron ore, producing high quality iron. As he was talking to the princess, Yuusuke spontaneously mentioned hiring Sorzak as his subordinate in the evil god corps.

"Eh, is it alright?" (Yuusuke)

"It depends on whether the person himself will be willing to join, but you are captain of the darkness god corps, one of the cornerstones of the palace's military." (Violet)

These elite corps were currently comprised of only five people from the knight corps. "You can't expect to carry on like that," continued Violet.

“You would learn of it sooner or later so let me tell you one thing, there are a lot of excellent soldiers who want to become members of the evil god corps.” (Violet)

It seemed that there were cases of knights from other palace corps submitting requests to be transferred to the evil god corps. Fire god’s corps, water god’s corps, earth god’s corps, wind god’s corps, a soldier could not be a member of every force simultaneously, so there were many transfer requests coming in from all over the place.

“Well, every last one of them is after the equipment that you provide your subordinates with.” (Violet)

“Oh, so that’s why!” (Yuusuke)

Focusing on this reason, Violet decided that it would be best to leave the search of new members to Yuusuke himself which would authorize him to invite any person that he judged suitable to join his corps. During this conversation, Sun took a quick glance at Yuusuke and quickly turned her eyes away before anyone could notice it.

***

Afterwards, Yuusuke returned to Sorzak’s place once again, briefly explaining him the situation, and asked whether Sorzak would agree to become an earth arts user under the banner of the evil god corps.

“How to say it, me as a member of the palace knights?!” (Sorzak)

“Even more so, you will be recognized as an elite divine arts user.” (Yuusuke)

Sorzak, who was a simple divine arts user, upon joining the evil god corps, would be promoted from a simple engineer to an elite soldier and would have to participate in military operations.

“No problem! No problem! To be invited to join the elite corps, even more so the rumored evil god corps. How lucky of me!” (Sorzak)

“I-is that so? … Then, please sign this contract.” (Yuusuke)

Beaming with joy, Sorzak placed his signature. With this, Yuusuke secured a person that would add a lot of utility to the evil god corps. (TN morelike to his customization)

***

Gazzetta’s mountains were dotted with countless villages that had their own soldier training grounds. In one of such villages, leaders of the white sword cavalry were discussing the latest information that had arrived from their capital.

“Is it Fonclanc’s conspiracy?” (WSC commander A)

“It’s highly probable.” (WSC officer A)

“It’s unlikely that the king is involved,” Shinha shook his head at his officer’s remarks.

The contact with the group of soldiers that was sent to investigate the disturbances within Fonclanc was lost one day after their departure. The returning survivor reported

that they were attacked by someone wearing Fonclanc forces' uniforms, as they were travelling through Blue Garden's territory.

Only one person has managed to return alive, carrying severe wounds that seemed to have been inflicted by a highly skilled fire arts user. As soon as he finished reporting the situation, the survivor lost his consciousness and was turned over to the water arts users.

His aides were questioning whether it was a conspiracy of Fonclanc to impersonate the Gazzetta army to kill off artless people, reducing the number of potential sources of disturbance as well as reducing the flow of people who were relocating to Gazzetta after being swayed by their envoys.

However, Shinha highly doubted such theory. He felt the character of king Esvobus when he had traveled to Fonclanc to investigate the evil god. Even more so, he ordered that the old man was to return home after the Blue Garden incident instead of requesting advantageous rights or any other type of reward. Such a man could not think of using the strategy that Shinha's close aides were speaking of.

"We need more accurate information." (Shinha)

"But Your Majesty, the majority of the spies are directed towards the occupation of Nossentes. "(WSC commander)

As the intelligence corps were preoccupied with the infiltration of Nossentes, redirecting them was impossible. However the situation was serious.

"We can't leave this situation as it is… Commander, take control of the entire army for a while." (Shinha)

"Your Majesty, you can't possibly…" (WSC commander A)

Shinha unfastened his white swords cavalry's armor as he cast his eyes onto the sky towards the direction of Fonclanc. He fastened his silver greatsword to his back and saddled his horse.

"I will be gone for a while." (Shinha)

Once again he had become an artless traveler and left his aides, frozen in confusion, behind as he rode off on the road towards Fonclanc. (Lunate: On the highway to hell. TL: Oh you don't know on point you are here, do you?

Chapter 37: The omens of the wind

After officially announcing Sorzak's addition to the Darkness god corps, rumors of the Darkness god corps captain scouting civilians were spread across the palace and the city.

Due to the influence of the rumors, Yuusuke abstains himself from going to the city, in order to curb this obstacle towards his mission, which was listening to the voice of the commoners, Violet's next plan was to let him take a break from patrolling for the time being.

"Hmmm, to combine the gears and the shifting of the gear…..this is pretty interesting."

5 days after the commotion subsided, Yuusuke visited Sorzak's shop with a prototype of a simple gear box. Yuusuke isn't really familiar with the full structure of this special machine, he only knows to the extend of a plastic model of a radio controlled car.

"For some reason after combining the items, the rotation became reverse, I do not know why it's like this."(Yuusuke)

"Affirmative, I will start researching it."(Sorzak)

Sorzak is an accessories maker and he was deeply interested in the experimental product which Yuusuke had made, thus he was very willing to collaborate in the development of the motion power of the mechanism. As Sorzak's purification technique resulted in high quality material, Yuusuke instructed him on the concept of making the form, thus Sorzak began to carry out a series of Research & Development to reproduce it.

As there wasn't any problem gathering the required materials, Yuusuke and Sorzak only had to make the parts based on the image. They began to research day and night on this "mysterious power" which made the experimental motor move permanently, and had no hindrances since they were in an environment that allowed them to research as much as they wanted.

"My final aim is to make a motor which has the same speed of a soldier carriage."

"OOhh, that's incredible! It's a really innovative idea."

With Yuusuke's plans of the development of a new kind of vehicle, Sorzak became greatly enthusiastic about it, due to his hobby of researching the unknown.

In the corners of the commoner district, the [Artless] cleaner groups could be seen moving around with their cleaning equipment. The supervisors whose responsibilities were to lead them, also have been observing the state of the inhabitants in the city. This was due to the recent raiding events which had occurred in the [Artless] villages.

People who own villages of artless within the territories of Fonclanc were not limited to palace officials, there was also the general public, thus the flow of information could not be suppressed. The story about Gazzetta's army raiding an artless village was being spread around, as the recent events of Paula's warfare was widely known, the citizens

all began to reprimand Gazzetta.

There was no suspicion amongst the artless within the territories. It was because of the long term stable relationship with actual skilled artless warriors, although it seems that the overall excellent physical ability of the artless against the divine art users was not known, thus the sense of crisis was slim.

After exiting Sorzak's store, Yuusuke went to check on the Artless cleaning groups before heading towards the stalls in the marketplace. As it was about time to give a new set of rings to the other royal knights, thus he came to purchase the appropriate rings.

Yet again, he began to restock materials in large quantities, in anycase he could just make shopping a part of his duties during patrolling. He also became familiar with the clerk as he always buys new stuff here every time.

After getting a certain degree of understanding of the market, there was certain advantages like the price and procurement of these goods.

"ah? Isotta, you're off duty today?"(Yuusuke)

After purchasing cheap rings as the base material, Yuusuke was scanning around the other stalls, when he spotted Isotta in her home clothes amongst the crowd. She seems to be stocking up on large amounts of food, as she waddled across the street holding a big basket. Her behaviour seemed very hazardous.

"Isotta."

"YES? ~ ! Cap, Captain!"

Isotta who seemed to be in her absent minded mode, began to panic as soon as she heard Yuusuke's voice. And then, without further ado, she began to entirely explain about her luggage even though Yuusuke hadn't asked her.

"Jus~Just a little shopping, it is, this is, food necessity!"(Isotta)

"I, I see…… Erm….. it seems heavy, let me help you carry to your house?"(Yuusuke)

"Eh! Noo, It's~It's fine!"(Isotta)

Looking at Isotta's plain frankness and nervous reaction as she waddled backwards, Yuusuke began to stare and approach her intensively. Moving backwards while stuttering, Isotta was eventually cornered to a wall of the alley.

As she no longer could back up due to the wall, she tried shifting her body side ways, but Yuusuke placed his hand on the wall to stop any chances of escaping and he began to approach her green diverting eyes with his face --

(TL note: KABE-DON! Really seriously. Seems like we can't avoid that here too.)

"Isotta…."(Yuusuke)

"Ye~Yes"(Isotta)

“.....it’s weird?”(Yuusuke)

“Auu……”(Isotta)

“What are you being so panicky about?”, as Yuusuke pressed the question onto her, while his voice was mixed with the bustling noises of the street vendors from the market behind him.

(´д)ﾋｿ(´д`)ﾋｿ(д`)* …. -- ara, isn’t this the darkness god corps captain -- why is he coaxing such a little girl? -- no, it seems like that child is related to the darkness god corps -- eh, then she is a underling -- come to think of it, it seems that Princess Violet’s hand was being propose -- I wonder who the hero prefers -- but then again it seems that they were all small kids -- …… (´д)ﾋｿ(´д`)ﾋｿ(д`)

“THAT’s NOT IT!”(Yuusuke)

Hearing the comments of the citizens at the market that were directed at him, he turned towards them and shouted. Then, he grabbed half of Isotta’s luggage, and grabbed her hand to pull her away from the alley.

“Erm….Captain.”

“hn~?”

The orange dusk light began to dye the streets of the artless as these 2 people walked along it. Bit by bit, they were approaching Isotta’s home while chatting amongst themselves. Because of the overly happy-go-lucky attitude of Yuusuke, Isotta confessed about why she was so timid.

“Really, there won’t be any problem….? My dad and my mum…. they are already rather old.”(Isotta)

“There’s no need to worry about that guy so much, I don’t think he would stoop so low and suddenly take hostages.”(Yuusuke)

While listening to her, Yuusuke arrived at the doorsteps of Isotta’s home where he previously visited. Yuusuke encouraged her as she began to show an uneasy look on her face.

“Mom, I am home~”(Isotta)

“Sorry to bother.”(Yuusuke)

“Welcome home Isotta, that was quick.”(Isotta’s mum)

“Welcome, Oh? Isn’t it the captain from before?”(Isotta’s dad)

As they walked through the cloth door entrance, they were greeted by Isotta’s parents. As Yuusuke placed the luggage that he was carrying on the floor, he saw a large sword that was placed at the back of the room leaning on the wall and a person relaxing--

“Take this Shinha!”

“Oh Yuusuke”

An attempted fist swing towards him, but missed terribly.

“Don’t Yuusuke me. What are you doing here?”(Yuusuke)

“Gathering intel. As usual this country is easy to sneak in and out.”(Shinha)

Leisurely avoiding his fist, Shinha blurted out his thoughts at the same time. It seems that he came alone, as there wasn’t any escorts/guards around.

“A king like you spying alone.”(Yuusuke)

“Fue, this degree for me, is nothing.”(Shinha)

In actual fact, Shinha judged that it was easier to move alone. It had just been only 3 days since he left the Gazzetta’s warrior training facility and had arrived here yesterday night, he entered sanc adiet through the artless street on the outer city.

But this does not mean that Fonclanc’s security is lousy, it’s just that the artless doesn’t really have a divine arts presence to get detected. By using the cover of night, the presences of an artless are completely being covered, thus the average divine arts user would not be able to detect them. Furthermore, this fella is an accustomed warrior artless who had been trained.

“And, why are you living at Isotta’s house again?”(Yuusuke)

As Isotta is also part of the divine god corps, she knows of Shinha identity. Thus Yuusuke came up with a theory, that in order to reduce his danger by just a little he came to a place where there was a lot of people and none who knew who he was. While listening, Shinha replied with a smile, ” Do you think she will hand me over to the soldiers?”

Yuusuke’s turn and look towards Isotta, as she was standing there with her shoulders trembling.

“Ahhh, my... parents! Because he is also a benefactor... like captain! So I thought, but, it’s all so sudden.”(Isotta)

“Hmmm…..I see, so it’s like this.”(Yuusuke)

Isotta was biting her lips while trying to explain to Yuusuke.

“So are you going to read me now….or is that an evil god’s art?”(Shinha)

“.....Didn’t I warn you not to look down on Noble Gamers.”(Yuusuke)

From Isotta’s point of view, Shinha was a benefactor who saved her parents life.

Due to the recent attacks on the artless villages which had happened in Fonclanc, Shinha said that it was unrelated to Gazzetta and he came to do an investigation, thus believing him, Isotta promise to harbor him for the time being.

So that was the secret behind why she was being so panicky in front of “Captain Yuusuke”. As She didn’t know how and what to explain to him when she saw him, she

was stunned and surprised.

“Are you fully aware of your place(Gazzetta) in the entire forces yet?”(Yuusuke)

“Tentatively. Although there are those whose ideals differ from my principle and policies, none of them would prepetrate this kind of stupid behavior.”(Shinha)

The investigation team that was sent by Gazzetta had suffered considerable amount of damage. According to the survivor, they had been attacked by troops clad in Fonclanc’s army uniform while they were crossing Blue Garden’s territory. His aides believe that it is a conspiracy of Fonclanc, but Shinha doubted that King Esvosbus would do that. And Yuusuke agreed with him.

“So it happened in Blue Garden’s territories.”(Yuusuke)

“It did, but I don’t think Risha would have the balls to do it.”(Shinha)

「言っておくが、リシャもそんな手段を取れる玉ではないぞ？」

“Don’t say balls, I also do not think that the queen would command such a thing.”(Yuusuke)

“Then…..Could it be….the remnants of the Izapnar faction?”(Shinha)

While Yuusuke and Shinha were discussing about the identity of the assailants and their purpose, Isotta began dinner preparations with her parents. It seems like new guests have arrived. “Arrived”, more like “appeared”, as a young green hair man manifested in front of them.

“Good evening, I wonder if Mr. Yuusuke is around?”

“!”

Isotta was immediately petrified with surprise. Although Reifold had a familiar wind art wave, his presence could not be felt at all, and he appeared right in front of her without warning. Her tension was loosened up when she felt her “Captain Yuusuke’s” unique wave, as he placed his hand on her shoulder.

“Ah, did I startle you~?”(Reifold)

“It’s been awhile, self proclaimed people of the forest.”(Yuusuke)

“People of the forest - “(Isotta)

After a weird warm greeting between Yuusuke and Reifold, Shinha who was taking a stance of readiness began to relax. The distance between the large sword leaning against the wall was much shorter than earlier, thus a depth of warning could be felt.

Reifold on the other hand did not show any worries about Shinha’s presence, as he was here with an important notice for Yuusuke.

“There’s an armed Gazzetta Army that seems to be moving in Fonclanc’s territories.”

Yuusuke and Shinha looked at each other. The direction it’s heading is a decent large scale artless village. It seemed like the target village is owned by the prestigious Volace

family, whereby Hivodir had went to stay over for a visit.

“That reminds me, that guy did say he was going there….”

“I tried contacting the private military soldiers who were located at the village, but it seems that the wind art transmission isn’t reaching.”

“Don’t tell me, there is a interference?”

Apparently, they would like to send a group to examine the situation, but there isn’t any “usable” forces in the area, as the main groups are all on the opposite side of Fonclanc’s territories accessing the damage.

“That means it’s time for the darkness god corps to shine.”(Reifold)

“So this is the sortie orders from Violet?”(Yuusuke)

Reifold responded by shaking his head, Yuusuke looks at him with a ‘what are you thinking about’ look.

“I’ll be informing the princess later, this time it’s an emergency dispatch instructions from King Esvosbus.”(Reifold)

While saying so, Reifold points towards the cloth door, as the cloth vigorously flung up, Vermeer and Fonke could be seen jumping in fully prepared in their god corps equipments.

“Captain! The orders of sorties!”

“Uwaa, He really is at Isotta’s place……”

The Sun had already set, as the grounds of Kaltico began to bathe in the night sky.

(TL Notes: I don’t know why the author wrote this….)

Chapter 38: White Beast

With the aim of reaching the Artless village that the prestigious family of Volace owns, the soldier carriages carrying the darkness god corps trotted along the highway in the night.

“Erm, Captain…..”(Vermeer)

“Don’t worry.”(Yuusuke)

On the carriage, Vermeer had a very complex expression as the King of Gazzetta was sitting next to Yuusuke. Although he said not to worry, the ‘Mission’ that was bestowed to the Captain of the Darkness God Corps, Yuusuke, was extremely difficult.

“But….”(Vermeer)

The one with the most complaints, Fonke, was currently busy stabilizing the carriage that was running at high speed, the second one that likes the nag a lot, Aisha, was restoring the horse strength through the use of her water arts.

Shaheed, on the other hand, didn’t have any interest in these things. With Isotta being as guilty as Yuusuke. That’s why, it was Vermeer’s role to question why Shinha was traveling with them, but--

“Well, don’t worry too much. By the way, it’s best to turn off the light source soon.”(Yuusuke)

“So what you’re saying is listen to my command!”(Vermeer)

“Fue”

“....Hiaz”

Seeing how Yuusuke’s and Shinha’s exchanges were without tension, Vermeer shakes his head as he dimmed the lights.

On the highway ahead of them was a small light. It seemed that they have reached the Village of artless where Hivodir was currently residing. For the time being, they waited for the instructions from their captain, but before Vermeer could speak out, Isotta issued a warning that there were enemies around the area.

“! Some-someone is coming…..one horse, the wave of a flame art user.”(Isotta)

Shaheed immediately slowed down the carriage’s speed, Yuusuke opened his customization menu for emergency use. Next to him, Shinha took his platinum greatsword into his hand and changed his posture, ready to attack.

The sound of the hooves could be heard as the figure on horseback from the other side of the darkness gradually came closer. As it approached a certain distance, Vermeer used his flame arts to discern the identity of the person.

“Hivodir!”

Leaning on the back of the horse under the cover of darkness on the highway was Hivodir, whose body was covered in wounds. Just a few days ago, Yuusuke saw him at the carriage porch cladded in 'Noble-like' clothings, and now he was filled with tears and burn marks which were aimed to kill him.

They calmed the agitated horse and lowered Hivodir down to the ground, thus allowing Aisha to begin healing him.

Just barely conscious, Hivodir could vaguely grasp his surroundings. Thanks to the healing properties of the mantle and Aisha's healing, he began to recover and notice his surroundings.

"Hey, are you alright?!"(Yuusuke)

"Oh, hey……Yuusuke….you came to help."(Hivodir)

"What the hell happened here?"(Yuusuke)

".....we were attacked…..the group were using Gazzetta's military equipment…."(Hivodir)

According to Hivodir's story, after finishing his usual routine of calculating the daily crops yield, an armed group suddenly started to invade the village with a night attack on the dormitories of the private mercenaries.

Because they had blocked the entrance of the dormitories during the attack, Hivodir and several other staff were attacked in a situation where they were defenceless.

The private mercenaries were patrolling the area in the vicinity, but their wind arts users, who were able to search for enemies, were brought down without anyone noticing, thus the first surprise attack was very effective.

"First an ice type skill came rushing in, I remember seeing an artless warrior….. and during the middle of the fight there was a flame art user."

Although his skill is considered mediocrely talented within the Flame God Corps, in terms of firepower Hivodir was more than strong enough. Not only were his arts at an elite level, moreover, he was also equipped with a ring of flame arts which he got from Yuusuke, which boosted the power of the flame bullets that he uses as his attack of choice. The flame bullet that he released onto the Artless warrior was a mistake, as the warrior immediately deflected his lump of flame.

"Are they in disguise….?"(Shinha)

"Yes, it seems like it…..although he looked like a artless warrior, he had the wave of someone possessing divine arts ~ o, HE APPEARS~~!"(Hivodir)

Shinha's appearance, who was standing there with his arm folded, listening to his explanation made Hivodir jump up when he noticed him. Vermeer was standing nearby giving a nod-like, ' I understand your feeling too'.

As Yuusuke was trying to access the situation, Shinha cast an important question at Hivodir.

“The general situation is known. Since you had escaped all alone by yourself, does that mean your men were all wiped out? What happened to the villagers?”

“Oh that’s right! My servants was in the middle of evacuating me when suddenly that guy came to block us….!”(Hivodir)

“Tsu! Isotta, what’s the current situation up ahead?”(Yuusuke)

“....It’s useless, there is too much distance between us…..ah, but, it seems like there is a slight disturbance in the air.”(Isotta)

Most likely, they are still fighting on the road, there is also the possibility that the fight is still going on in the village. Yuusuke immediately put up an emergency contact to the palace, while Hivodir prepared to rescue his servants whom helped him escape. Thus the carriage rushed towards the village all in preparation for war.

“Where’s the group in charge of pursuits”(Commander)

“They haven’t returned. But, it seems that a number of employees and the Fonclanc’s aristocrat had escaped.”

“Hmmm….with that kind of wound, he won’t be saved.”(Commander)

Since the Wind art transmission whereby a frequent report that is being sent out had stopped, soon enough the reinforcement will come from the town. The captain of the armed forces was dressed up in Gazzetta’s army uniform, and he had determined that it was a good time to move to the next location, thus he issued an order of withdrawal.

“Burn the village! We are heading to our next goal, get the pursuit team to meet us there!”(Commander)

They moved around the buildings of the village and began to set fire onto the barns and farms. Because the villagers and the garrison troops that were in the Volace family villa had been evacuated, the villa was created to be fireproof by earth arts, thus in order to burn it they had to stack oil wood.

Although the loss of the Fonclanc noble was unexpected, the moderate resistance was rather convenient.

“Yosh, time to retreat!”(Commander)

After alighting the village on fire, the group disappeared.

The small light that was visible in the distance, soon became a wildfire engulfing the area. Vermeer who immediately realised it, pointed out that the village is on fire.

“Most probably they had set it on fire.”(Vermeer)

“It would be better if we rush over….”

“Erm! Cap~Captain, in the forest ahead, there seem to be multiple units….. they are

currently in combat!”(Isotta)

The moment Isotta alerted us of a battle, everyone looked towards the forest beyond the highway, as it seems there were lights coming from the fire rife. Shaheed as the coachman, immediately slowed down the carriage. Just before the carriage came to a complete stop, Shinha jumped off while brandishing his great sword and ran towards the forest.

“I will take over this location, you guys go ahead.”(Shinha)

“Shinha! OMG Vermeer, take over the leadership. Head towards the village, if it looks bad don’t hesitate to turn around and retreat.”(Yuusuke)

After entrusting the leadership, Yuusuke jumped off the carriage when it was slowed and chased after Shinha. As he had counted the recovered Hivodir into the forces, he believed it would be alright as long as they do not encounter a large number of enemies.

“So what now…?”(Shaheed)

“As per captain’s instruction, we will head for the village.”(Vermeer)

Shaheed questioned whether it was wise to leave it to their captain and King Shinha, thus Vermeer judged that they should prioritize Yuusuke’s orders. Seeing Yuusuke’s back disappear into the forest, the carriage began to increase its speed again.

“So that’s that, when the time comes please help okay?”(Vermeer)

“Um, hmm, leave it to me.”(Hivodir)

Hivodir was added into the combat personnels group of Vermeer, as they headed towards the village that was being attacked.

“Is it good for you to come together with me? Your underlings doesn’t seem like the type that could put up a decent fight.”(Shinha)

“Says the person who selfishly jumped off the carriage alone, but it probably doesn’t matter who is stronger in terms of divine arts or in a fight in this situation right?”(Yuusuke)

Vermeer and his band had already defeated users of much higher divine arts strength than their own at Gearhawk fortress.

Although there was the assistance of those customized daggers, he was also very experienced, and one would call him a veteran. Even though Yuusuke had feelings of worries, he trusted him.

This time, Hivodir was also around, so the attacking department would not be lacking, and Yuusuke also wanted to see Shinha in action.

“That was unexpectedly admirable, or are you the kind that would even use a protected victim.”(Shinha)

“Huh? His injuries are already healed right, he’s a palace knight shouldn’t he be helping too?”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke began thinking about a simulation RPG style type of game, the general overall felt like a phrase type event from it, due to the reason of “the victims have escape” or “because it is noble”, with this to not participate in such event is such a waste.

“It was important to go back to the city first.” but this was an impossible selection. Yuusuke and Shinha were chatting while running, as masses of stray flame bullets whooshes passed them.

“That’s a great judgement!”

“Yeah.”

As the two of them dived to the left and right, they saw a faint figure heading into the darkness between the trees. They began to run and chase after it so as to not lose sight of it. Was the person hit by the flames or the flames was released by the person, from this distance it was still too hard to judge.

They could see a twin pig-tailed figure in maid clothings running away. After confirming that it was a servant that worked in Hivodir’s house, Yuusuke was about to call out to her, but then something took place that caused her to stumble.

At that moment, 2 to 3 masses of fire came flying from the back of the forest, seeing that Yuusuke jumped out in front of the servant cover her with his mantle and erected a earth barrier. The barrier shattered immediately after the third fire mass hit.

As the barrier shattered, the scatter flame from the fire mass befell onto Yuusuke and the servant, but due to the heavy customization onto his darkness god corps uniform, it prevented and protected its wearer and anyone under the cloak from the fire shockwave.

“That was close~”(Yuusuke)

“You, you are….”

“I’m Yuusuke from the darkness god corps, are you Hivodir’s maid/servant?”(Yuusuke)

“Me, Yes, I am! ….. Erm, is young master safe?”(Maid-san)

Calling Hivodir “young master” seems all too apparent to Yuusuke and he wanted to joke about it, but as of now it seems to be all too serious. After hearing the safety of Hivodir, the maid showed a relieved expression. (TLC notes: Just you wait Hivodir, Yuusukue will not forget this. Baka~)

It seems that she was a movement type wind arts user. She had been making use of her movement assist wind arts to help her escape from her pursuers by using guerilla tactics on them.

As Yuusuke helped the maid to stand, a mass of fire came flying from behind a tree, it seems that the whoever was hiding in the darkness of the forest was very persistent. So Yuusuke closed his eyes and tried to pick up any noise in the darkness, rather than insects there were a mixed sound of rustling.

“I want to quickly group up with the reinforcements coming from the highway, Shinha! Do you know the whereabouts of the enemies?”(Yuusuke)

“I have no idea, I can’t see anything in this darkness.”(Shinha)

Shinha was hiding the same way just a few meters away, maintaining a low profile by crouching down. He scanned the surrounding area and was in a position to charge the moment he felt any movement.

“Any foolish move is dangerous….”

“Erm, there are still the butlers and other servants.”(Maid)

The moment the maid brought up the topic of other servants, a red flame lit up from within the darkness. Without us noticing, the hidden figure that was behind the tree, fired 2 mass of fire from the front of us.

“Danger! Take cover.”(Yuusuke)

“KYA!”(Maid)

Yuusuke created an earth wall to repel the attack, but because it was focused on reinforcing the front, he couldn’t react in time from an attack on the right side. Thus he prepared to protect the maid from the impact.

“Just lay down!”(Shinha)

Just before the mass of fire impacted, Shinha jumped over towards Yuusuke and smashed it with his platinum greatsword.

Shinha had been trained to know the different types of divine arts, thus he was accustomed to fighting divine arts users. He also had experienced the power of the elite team from Blue Garden when he was on the journey to find the evil god.

After confirming the direction of the “Enemy” in the darkness, Shinha leaped towards it, kicking the tree, scraping the earth, moving left and right like a beast chasing it’s prey, he charged towards the flame art user who was lurking in the darkness.

Seeing Shinha with a sparkling white blade charging fiercely towards him, the flame art user panicked, as he threw a mass of fire blindly trying to intercept him. That mistake cost him his location. It was the 2nd mistake that he had done for today. Furthermore, this time it was a deadly one.

“Argh, so that’s it…..”

Rushing thoroughly by instincts, Shinha wore a ferocious smile as he completed his capturing goal.

“Oi Shinha! Don’t kill him!”(Yuusuke)

“I understand, I’ll leave….one alive!”(Shinha)

As Shinha was answering him, a sound like smashing of fruits could be heard through the area. The movement of the large sword removing the blood with a swing could be

seen in parallel with finding it's next target, 2 shots of flame could be seen flying towards him as he dodged it with ease, while crushing another shot that came flying towards him.

And then from between the trees a gale came blowing through with a vigor and there stood 2 flame art users disguised as Gazzetta's army soldiers in the distance, where they were holding masses of flames in their hands, which was immediately cut into 2 by the vertical sword in a raised arm.

"GYAHHHHHHH"

"Hi…….Argh!"

Shocked by the death shriek and agony scream that his ally let out, he tried to escape, but he received a strong blow from behind which crushed his spine.

The flame arts user was groaning as he tried to suppressed his arm by holding his only arm left on his neck, when suddenly a chop came from behind and took his consciousness away. And the silence returned.

"You overdid it!"(Yuusuke)

Currently, Shinha was trying to stop the bleeding of his prisoner, while Yuusuke came over with the maid. The moment the maid saw the sight of the torn arm, she immediately grasped her mouth with both hands as she almost threw up. Although the man with a crushed spine was still some how breathing, it would soon result in death if healing is not done.

The first blood which was drawn had been restored by Yuusuke, the face was determined to stay the same as he judged. This was in order to identify the assailants, so it would be troubling if the state is too terrible.

"OMG, it really is unrivalled(無双)."(Yuusuke)

"Dream(ムソウ)?"(Shinha)(TL note: the romaji and katakana is the same pronunciation but both have different meaning)

"It means that there isn't 2 of a kind."(Yuusuke)

"Oh I see, so that's what unrivalled(無双) means…..fumu."(Shinha)

He seemed to be pleased.

"In any case, we'll be instantly transferring to the highway. We should check on the servants to see if they are safe, but first let's meet up with the reinforcements."

"Roger that."

"What about that guy?"

"Let him grasp your sword."

Indeed, the healing effect of Shinha's great sword was powerful enough to heal the

exposed spine. Prompting to Yuusuke that it could cheat death, he had something else planned. ”It’s my family heirloom, don’t try and cheat me to pass it over to you”, a Shinha-like hesitant move, but….

“.....I will restore the sword to it’s original form.”(Yuusuke)

“.....I guess there wasn’t any other choice.”(Shinha)

Shinha reluctantly, really reluctantly, passed the sword over with a huge sigh like a dying man. (TL notes: Bye bye OP sword.)

Chapter 39: At the Artless Village

Having met up with the emergency dispatchment of soldiers, Yuusuke's group was now riding towards the attacked artless village.

As current soldiers under Yuusuke's command were dispatched here on an extremely short notice, their overall skill level was not high. They were a ragtag bunch of fellows that barely passed the minimum qualifications required to serve the kingdom. Few of them understood the important tactics, Yuusuke relied on, or danger that came along with the mission.

Therefore they have not been assigned to Deernook fortress, neither have they participated in the battle of Paula fortress nor did they knew anything about Shinha. Because of that, they were assigned to an artless village that was seemingly devoid of any problems.

"So Fonclanc is also severely shorthanded?" (Shinha)

"Don't you think that their timing was too good?" (Yuusuke)

Presently all of the Fonclanc's forces were sent out towards various artless villages, dotting the vast territory.

On top of not knowing the actual strength of the enemy, the enemy seemed to be a very well organized group of artless soldiers. At the battle of Paula, it became apparent that an army of artless solders was a tough opponent even for experienced divine art knights.

Although Sanc Adiet was a huge city requiring a huge force to defend it, king Esvobus decided against restricting the defended outer areas (read as "areas outside of the city") only to those that involved the territories of the important people of the capital (palace officials, rich elite). No matter how one looked at it, Fonclanc was severely shorthanded.

"The king seems to be gentle to the people" (Shinha)

"That is probably better than a despot." (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke inadvertently replied with a very harsh remark.

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"We can see the village" (Yuusuke)

When Yuusuke's party arrived at the village, most of the buildings had already burned down and only the scalding black ruins greeted them, but they could still see some burning buildings further inside.

"Aaagh! The mansion!" (Servant)

According to the rescued maid of house Volace, the building that was burning deeper in the village was a resort, belonging to Volace family. Hearing that the villagers were taking refuge there, Yuusuke's group rushed towards the mansion. Once they reached

the building, Vermeer was frantically trying to put out the fires with a group of around ten soldiers.

The guards of the mansion seemed to have successfully made their escape from the burning house.

“Captain!” (Vermeer)

“Vermeer, are there any villagers inside?” (Yuusuke)

“It seems there are some in the back, but I can’t confirm whether they are alive or dead.” (Vermeer)

“The flames are too strong, if this continues on the building will completely burn down along with everyone inside.” (Yuusuke)

Looking for the endowment or offensive type water arts user, Yuusuke turned towards the soldiers, who were sent as his support. At first he intended to ask them to locate Shaheed, but he saw only stern, strained faces in front of him, so he ordered them to try to fight the fire by pouring buckets of water onto it instead. (T.N. no idea what this was supposed to tell us)

“Hivodir, are there any information about refugees?” (Yuusuke)

“Uhhhm, I think that they might be in the hall on the first floor. That should be the place to run, right? Rifuose” (Hivodir)

“Yes, there’s a basement that spans under half of the house. The entrance is in the hall.” (Rifuose)

Previously saved servant girl supported Hivodir’s reasoning.

“Mhm, understood. Therefore I will break down the house a little bit.” (Yuusuke)

“No problems, you will be able to rebuild it afterwards, right?” (Hivodir)

Hivodir agreed, as he understood the situation. Yuusuke smiled at Hivodir and started running towards the burning house.

Hivodir’s knights and supporting soldiers were all looking at the captain of the darkness god corps who had dived straight into the sea of fire.

Hot wind was blowing into his face and was making his hair sway. With the mantle protecting him from the cinders dancing in the air, he managed to approach the outer wall of the building and, after hitting the wall, opened the customization menu. One weak point of Yuusuke’s customization power was that he needed to be close to the object he wanted to customize, in order to use his powers.

To customize something at a long distance, like the stone pillar, which he used during the battle of Paula, he needed to do precise tactical preparations in advance and execute them perfectly. It was not something he could do on the fly.

“Achacha! It’s hot! … good, execute!” (Yuusuke)

Yelling out from the heat Yuusuke manipulated the customization menu, destroying the entire mansion save for the place that the refugees were expected to be. The entire burning building was enveloped in the light effect and, after they receded, the mansion and the flames were gone and only the light particles were dancing in their stead. With that shouts arose from the knights and the soldiers, sent as support.

"Amazing job, captain" (Vermeer)

"I managed that somehow… There's still smoke rising from the ruins, so extinguish them properly." (Yuusuke)

The pillar of smoke that was steadily rising up until now was starting to get scattered away by the wind. In a small recess, in the middle of where the mansion was supposed to be, several villagers were looking around themselves with stupefied expressions on their faces.

"Whaa, no matter how many times I look at your power, it always surpasses any common sense." (Hivodir)

"Buzz off." (Yuusuke)

In any case, the safety of the villagers had been confirmed. The rebuilding would have to wait until the morning, so Yuusuke had gathered what materials have remained unburnt and built temporary shelters for the villagers to rest.

Soldiers were ordered to carry out a search party for the missing people and account for those that were currently present. Yuusuke ordered Hivodir, who wanted to pursue the party that attacked the village, to stay in the village and gather the dead and the injured.

Hivodir was told that the fire arts users that were reported to have fallen prey to the group that Shinha was pursuing were undoubtedly with the attackers during the latest attack.

The remaining two soldiers were wearing Gazzetta army uniforms, but the attack strategy was centered on a fire arts user. At that time, the soldiers reported that they found bodies, likely to belong to the attackers, near the village.

Yuusuke, accompanied by the members of the darkness god corps, as well as Shinha, went down to the corpses and confirmed them to be artless who had traces of severe burn marks on their bodies.

"…there is no mistake, these soldiers belong to the reconnaissance unit of the silver sword." (Shinha)

"Ehhh…" (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was surprised by Shinha's conclusions. Fonke and Vermeer looked at each other, then Fonke said,

"Then, Gazzetta was definitely behind this attack?" (Fonke)

"No, you can't say that. Hmm… can't you read the situation?" (Shinha)

“What?” (Fonke)

Instead of an explanation, Shinha told Yuusuke something similar to what he had said at Isotta’s house. He talked about an investigatory group that was attacked five days ago as it was traveling through Blue Garden’s territory to investigate the attacks on the artless villages in Fonclanc. Survivors testified that attackers were wearing Fonclanc corps military uniforms.

“What the hell is that? It’s the first time I have heard of this.” (Fonke)

“Of course, because the attackers definitely did not belong to Fonclanc’s army.” (Shinha)

Shinha answered Fonke. Somehow, Yuusuke was able to understand the hidden meaning by combining this with what Shinha had said earlier during the day. Hivodir also seemed to understand the situation as he silently nodded, putting his hand to his chin.

“And they were not the Blue Garden’s army?” (Yuusuke)

“That’s right, by the way, only one person returned alive to Gazzetta.” (Shinha)

“Aaaah… now I see.” (Hivodir)

“Eh, what’s that? I don’t understand a thing here.” (Fonke)

Fonke looked at his fellows in the darkness god corps with a perplexed face. Yuusuke explained to them the conclusions that Shinha had arrived at. Shinha thought it was very likely that the group that attacked this village today was the same one that destroyed the investigation group in the Blue Garden’s territory.

Thus it was very likely that the attackers have brought the corpses of the dead members of the investigation squad and had dropped them off near this village.

Shinha came to a conclusion that it had to be a conspiracy of some third party, who tried to set up a conflict between Fonclanc and Gazzetta. This third party was then trying to create a situation where Fonclanc, in order to stop the diminishment of artless people and to stop the flow of refugees, turning over to Gazzetta, organized a purge of the artless people, attempting to frame Gazzetta army using the corpses of their troops.

“Someone is trying to persuade Gazzetta that this is a conspiracy by Fonclanc, convincing Fonclanc of the opposite at the same time.” (Yuusuke)

Shinha has revealed that the officers were undecided whether this was Fonclanc’s doing. Looking back at Fonke, he was frowning as if he had gotten a headache from all this information.

“Uhm, that is… how to say it… it has not been done by us or by Gazzetta, or by Fonclanc, but by some unrelated party, right?” (Fonke)

“That’s right. As far as I know, such a radical group does not exist within Fonclanc, and I hope you are keeping Gazzetta in check.” (Yuusuke)

“Judging from their actions, a reconciliation faction might have a hand in this, however there are fools that would join those guys everywhere.” (Shinha)

Even if they pretended to be from Gazzetta, the country has been surrounded in mysteries for so long, that there was no reliable information on them. However there was no way those guys could imitate the color of the hair. However, it was nearly impossible to eliminate the Gazzetta investigation squad without the intel from within Gazzetta’s chain of command.

“But, in order to do that… these attackers would need to have an extremely detailed information about Fonclanc. Certainly, they would need to have strong connection with these guys.” (Shinha)

“In case of a Fonclanc/Gazzetta conflict, they would gain a lot of influence, right?” (Hivodir)

“However, why did they only deal so little damage if they have such a strong military force?” (Yuusuke)

The group tried relentlessly to grasp the identity of their invisible enemy. Glancing at the bodies of the victims being gathered in one place (except for the bodies of the investigation squad) everyone was brainstorming about their enemy.

“There is no reason to relate this with the remnants of the Izapnar faction, right…?” (Shinha)

“No, they could be able to do this. Izapnar’s faction is comprised of elite troops, right? They would have extensive knowledge about Fonclanc.” (Yuusuke)

“Izapnar’s faction, eh? Who is the one, pulling the strings from behind, in that case…? Anyone has any ideas?” (Hivodir)

“Maybe… Nossentes?” (Shinha)

Nossentes was the second biggest country in Kaltcio, with its capital situated in an ancient city widely regarded as the most ancient city in the world. The country had a long running history and was said to be the origin of the religion of the four great gods. Its political system was also based on the caste system. Gazzetta, which now announced the resurrection of the white tribe empire, held Nossentes as their foremost target.

“Hey, hey, isn’t that because you set your sights on it that they would try to push Gazzetta like that?” (Hivodir)

“If you want to say so…” (Shinha)

For a major power like Nossentes, whose leaders saw the rise of Gazzetta as a nationwide problem, creating a conflict between Gazzetta and Fonclanc and forcing them to fight it out and weaken each other would indeed be a lucrative opportunity.

Although Nossentes seemed to take the role of a spectator during the Blue Garden/Fonclanc war, due to their rapid advance towards Gazzetta it was apparent that they were steadily making preparations for the mobilization of their military. (T.N. probably related to the unrest in Gazzetta which was hinted in chapter 31)

“Ahhh, divine arts users sure are an aggressive bunch. Hey Yuusuke, how about moving to Gazzetta and we both start to working together?” (Shinha)

“So you say, don’t take advantage of the situation to try and use one of your persuasions.” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke shrugged his shoulders and refused Shinha, who tried to persuade him in a jokingly tone.

Chapter 40: Flames, fangs, and an underground city

In the upper reaches of the Volance palace, king Esvobus was discussing with his officials about the situation so far and the measures that they would take from now on. The heated discussion was now ongoing regarding the damage to a dukedom and whether palace knight corps should be dispatched there to defend it from further attacks.

Due to the decaying internal situation, there were voices calling to postpone the conference with Blue Garden.

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When Yuusuke's group returned to the palace, the night was already late. They returned back to the city with the knights when the reinforcements arrived to replace them in the village. They were now on the standby, preparing to resume their patrol duties.

When they arrived at the city, Shinha disembarked from their carriage and disappeared within the artless district. It seemed, that he would return to Gazzetta tomorrow, after spending one more day to observe the situation.

"With this we are done here for today. Good work, everyone." (Yuusuke)

"Thanks, you too, captain." (Vermeer)

"We'll be at the resting room for a while." (Men)

"Yaaaawn, I'm beat." (Aisha)

After they said their goodbyes at the carriage boarding area, they split up to rest. Vermeer and Shaheed turned towards the resting room to take a nap, Aisha returned to her own room. Fonke seemed to be going to visit the nightsingers as usual, while Isotta returned to her parents' home in the artless district.

"Then, we're off." (Men)

Hivodir's luxurious cloak was tattered, the elegance it was supposed to give off long gone. Rifuose, the servant girl(use maid T-T) was standing near Hivodir. She tried to bow politely, however she was so weary that she was barely standing and had stumbled instead. Hivodir promptly lent the girl a shoulder to prevent her from falling.

"I am terribly sorry." (Rifuose)

Yuusuke was surprised to see this side of Hivodir, as the girl promptly apologized with a weak voice.

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The next day, morning —

Violet, dissatisfied with the darkness god corps being ordered around with no prior notice, informed Yuusuke that it could not be helped, but his corps were ordered to act as reinforcements for the Volace mansion in the dukedom.

Still, in regards with the actions of the evil god corps in saving the Volace mansion, other important families that eyed Yuusuke with suspicions up until now had started to change their opinion of him.

It was especially evident between the families, whose sons were the fiancé candidates. They were ordered by their families to thank Yuusuke on their behalf for the safe return of the chief fiancé candidate, Hivodir. (T. N. was he supposed to be saved? Lunaris pls!)

"There's a person from Gazzetta in the city?" (Krielov)

"He is Shinha-sama, the prince of Gazzetta?" (Violet)

"No, he is supposed to be their king." (Krielov)

"A king came alone all the way out here?" (Violet)

Krielov and Violet were stupefied after receiving a report about the latest mission of the evil god corps. Violet caught Krielov by the hem of his clothes and stopped him from rushing out of the room.

"Wait a bit, Krielov." (Violet)

"But now the king of Gazzetta is in out there in the city, we can't let this chance pass." (Krielov)

"What for? Do you want to create an excuse for an all-out war with Gazzetta?" (Violet/Yuusuke)

"Ah, no… that is…" (Krielov)

Stuttered Krielov, who was caught thinking only of a possible benefit of restraining the king of Gazzetta, who might be responsible for the recent attacks. If Shinha was right, by doing so Krielov would be playing right into the ploy of the third party (Nossentes) which Yuusuke had informed them about.

"I want to meet him too. Do you think you could arrange it, Yuusuke?" (Violet)

"Again with your absurd ideas… I think he might still be at Isotta's" (Yuusuke)

"Princess… you can't be possibly thinking of… at least take some guards with you (travel incognito)" (Krielov)

"Of course I am, I just have to do it without being noticed." (Violet)

Violet remembered the ghost incident and the underground level of the city that has been closed off. Princess proposed an idea where she would wait inside of underground levels of the palace while Yuusuke would lead Shinha to her by customizing an underground passage under the guidance of Sorzak.

"So, you want me to create a tunnel from the very edge of the city?" (Yuusuke)

"Mhm, I do expect to meet you at the underground soon." (Violet)

***

On his way to the artless district, Yuusuke stopped by Sorzak's shop. When he arrived at Isotta's house he found Shinha almost ready to leave and told him that princess Violet wanted to meet him.

"Sure, why not." (Shinha)

"At least think a little before agreeing." (Yuusuke)

Taking Shinha along with him, he entered the lower class district and proceeded through the less crowded streets towards the place in the middle class district that Sorzak has directed them to. Although the entrance was closed only three days ago, it seemed that a new hole had already reopened.

"So Sorzak, you continue to frequent the underground despite the warnings…" (Yuusuke)

"No, no it's not me… It reappeared due to a busy road nearby." (Sorzak) (T.N. Sorzak meant that hole appeared because of the vibrations from a nearby road)

Happy to take every chance to explore the underground city, Sorzak answered with a joke thinking that this time the trip underground was not related to any punishable offence. After all, not to mention the usage of the underground space, even disclosing the information about its existence was a breach of law.

"… princess is waiting for us in the underground of the palace, correct?" (Sorzak?)

"Haha, knowing that princess it's truly a befitting place for her." (Yuusuke?)

"Hmm, speaking of the royalty of Fonclanc, they are sure complacent to the lower castes…" (Shinha)

"No, I think that Violet is a special case?" (Sorzak?)

"You are pretty special yourself," retorting that to Sorzak, Yuusuke proceeded down the alley, apologizing to the nightsingers that had taken their posts there.

At first the girls started to run away not minding that they were bare naked, however, when one of them shouted "It's captain Yuusuke from the evil god corps," they soon put up their business smiles and proceeded to make their advances.

Although Yuusuke politely refused as he was on a mission, they attempted to fake fainting as a last ditch effort to get his attention. Finally, following Sorzak's, who was carrying a lantern, they reached an unnatural opening in the wall and descended to the underground city of the middle class district.

"If we take this way, there is a shortcut to the palace, however a large part of the road through the upper class district will be submerged." (Sorzak)

"Aah, it's all right, I will deal with it somehow." (Yuusuke)

"Hmm… this is an ideal hiding place." (Shinha)

"… don't disappear on us here, okay?" (Yuusuke)

Since one had to enter the middle class district if one wanted to enter the underground, it would be unreasonable for artless, who's movements in the district were restricted, to hide here. However, since it was Shinha we are talking about here, Yuusuke thought that this guy could actually do it.

***

After following Sorzak's directions for over one hour, the group ended up in front of something that looked similar to the wall that divided the districts.

"The underground on the other side of this wall should belong to the palace." (Sorzak)

"I see." (Shinha)

Checking the surroundings in the customization menu, Yuusuke confirmed that this structure used to be the old protective wall (of the palace). By creating a passage in this wall they were able to enter the palace underground. Admiring the ancient underground, Sorzak diverted his attention towards a strange dull sound that resounded in the labyrinth.

"This sound…" (Sorzak)

"It's probably Violet." (Yuusuke)

It was an electric fan, a sound that was unfamiliar to the people of Fonclanc. Only the [Flying saucer] that Violet had could have emitted it in this world. It seemed they were close to their destination so Yuusuke shouted slightly louder than usually.

"Viiiooooolet! Aare yoouu theeree?!" (Yuusuke)

"Yuusuke! Yoouu aare heeree aalreeadyy!?" (Violet)

"Yes! I am around the carriage boarding area!" (Yuusuke)

Echoes of their shouts reverberated in the area. After exchanging shouts a few more times they met each other in the entrance hall of the old palace.

Members of the evil god corps, as well as Sun, armed with the bow, stood alongside Krielov and Violet. Sun exchanged the corps uniform, she had worn in the training grounds earlier, for some simple clothes, meanwhile Krielov was staring at Shinha with wary eyes.

"It's a pleasure to meet you for the first time, princess of Fonclanc." (Shinha)

"Call me Violet. I am glad you accepted the invitation, king of Gazzetta." (Violet)

"It's Shinha. Why did you want to meet with me?" (Shinha)

"There was no particular reason. I just wanted to meet you, since the opportunity presented itself." (Violet)

"Is that so?" (Shinha)

["Informal secret meeting between king Shinha and princess Violet?"] With thoughts like that, the tension rose amongst the spectators, Krielov's forehead swiftly gaining its

trademark wrinkles. Princess of the flames and the white wolf exchanged a few more sentences to gauge the capabilities of the other party.

"So, you want to get Yuusuke to join you?" (Violet)

"Hmph! Evil god, a being that carries decision over the cycles of the world, don't you think that such being is beyond you?" (Shinha)

"Wa–! Wa–!" (Yuusuke?) (T.N. Yuusuke tried to speak English here)

Hearing Shinha speaking of evil god, Yuusuke frantically tried to interrupt the conversation. He was lucky as instead of listening to Shinha, Violet hit him (Yuusuke) with a frying fan shouting "You are noisy!!"

"Hey, don't be noisy. I already know that Yuusuke is the evil god." (Violet)

"Hah, how?!" (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was so shocked that he even mixed in some English words. Violet continued as the flying saucer recovered from the crash and started rising again from the top of Yuusuke's head.

"What's with the strange accent? I heard it from Sun earlier." (Violet)

"Ah!… I am terribly sorry. I accidently spoke of it earlier." (Sun)

"Haaah." (Yuusuke)

Thinking of how could this happen, Yuusuke could not utter a word. She was certainly tricked into revealing it, however it also meant that Sun trusted Violet enough to share her innermost secrets.

However the members of the evil god corps, who supported Yuusuke though dangerous missions, were also people who deserved to be trusted. Meanwhile the girl in question, Sun, touched Yuusuke's back and froze (all red). Violet, turned towards Shinha, looked at him with youthful fire in her eyes, and told him:

"Well, with this being the case there is all the more reason for preventing Yuusuke from joining you." (Violet)

"…" (Shinha)

Unusually for Shinha, he could not retort to the bold act of the princess. Yuusuke feeling the atmosphere around the two and being fully aware of what Violet is capable off, turned to Shinha and spoke:

"This princess is sure difficult to deal with." (Yuusuke)

"Eh, this cute looking thing?" (Shinha)

"I don't know about cute, but she acted like that in the past as well." (Yuusuke)

"Your patience sure is something." (Shinha)

Violet tried to appeal to the two guys who were speaking her down, but, unable to

discern truth from lies, she could only laugh sarcastically. However, due to this, the strained atmosphere of an informal secret meeting turned to calm and relaxed one in just an instant.

“Speaking of queen Rishause, it seems that the meeting with Blue Garden will be postponed.” (Violet)

Violet had heard this in the morning as she stumbled upon a discussion between her father, his close aides, and the bureaucrats when she went to greet him this morning. Shinha was unhappy with these news. In the light of the recent events it had some sense as merely talking about the problem was not enough.

Shinha explained that if he was right and Nossentes was indeed responsible for the actions that escalated the conflict between Fonclanc and Gazzetta, he thought it to be much more beneficial to deepen the relationship with queen Rishause, who held full authority within her kingdom, as the people of the Blue Garden were surely be affected by these events.

“If Fonclanc and Blue Garden become allies, wouldn’t that trouble Gazzetta in the future?” (Violet)

“That is of no significance to us.” (Shinha)

“Hmm, you are pretty full of yourself.” (Violet)

“Because I have already assumed this to happen.” (Shinha)

***

Before long their informal secret meeting came to an end and Violet’s group returned to the palace, while Yuusuke and Sorzak guided Shinha back into the city.

“Do your plans include a confrontation with Fonclanc?” (Yuusuke)

“If that will be necessary, yeah.” (Shinha)

“Rather, you spoke earlier that you need the divine arts users society to crumble before the prosperity of the white tribe can be returned.” (Yuusuke)

“As this involve all of Kaltcio, I will need evil god’s power to accomplish that.” (Shinha)

Yuusuke was again burdened with the thoughts on how much did Shinha know about the evil god. He felt that he would have to visit the white tribe’s village one way or another at some point in the future. As for Shinha’s words that he would be an essential part in his plans, Yuusuke had no way to confirm or deny the meaning behind these words.

“You were speaking about the possibility of becoming hostile in the future, but what would you do if you were caught here?” (Yuusuke)

“I am not an essential part of this plan. If I were to perish here, Gazzetta would just welcome a new king that would lead them to the new era.” (Shinha)

“How do I say it… you would not mind another person becoming a king?” (Yuusuke)

“Don’t be so negative.” (Shinha)

Anyhow, it was clear to Yuusuke that Shinha was acting on his own volition, in fact, he seemed to be easily handling his duty. Shinha’s way of talking about the revival of the white clan empire, it too seemed like he was talking about something that was destined to fall sooner or later.

Contradiction between talking like he understood that nothing is eternal in the world yet actively striving towards the fulfillment of the desire of the white tribe did not feel right for Yuusuke. Yuusuke felt that he wanted to have a nice chat with Shinha, leaving countries, evil god and other matters aside.

“Then, until the next time we meet!” (Yuusuke)

“Uhm, see ya.” (Shinha)

Escorted out of the underground and then to the artless district, Shinha left Sanc Adiet without any more delays.

***

“Then, call me again if you need anything.” (Sorzak)

“Mhm, thank you.” (Yuusuke)

Having separated with Sorzak in the middle class district, Yuusuke returned to the palace and headed towards the knights resting room. Violet, having returned from the underground, was having a lively chat with the members of the evil god corps and Sun. Lastly, Krielov was at his desk, making arrangements to advise the King against postponing the meeting with Blue Garden.

“Oh, you are back, Yuusuke.” (Violet)

“Good work captain. Please join us.” (Vermeer)

“Yuusuke-san, please take this.” (Sun + Isotta)

Sun and Isotta presented Yuusuke with a cup of rara juice, which was the drink that everyone was enjoying. Having used a moment when Yuusuke let his guard down, while being approached by the girls, Fonke asked Yuusuke a certain question.

“By the way… yesterday in the city—“ (Fonke)

Able, or unable to read the atmosphere, he asked Yuusuke about a certain rumor that he had heard in the town.

“They say that you like all types of girls, no matter if they are divine arts users or artless.“ (Fonke)

“Ah, something about being a hero, that is a subjective opinion…” (Yuusuke)

“But the rumors say that you had a nice time with a girl from one of the elite troupes of Blue Garden on the day that you conquered the entire fortress.” (Fonke)

“Wait! Were you the one that started this rumor?!” (Yuusuke)

“They say that you also relentlessly force yourself on your subordinates.” (Fonke)

“I DO NOOOOT! AND WHERE THE FUCK DID “RELENTLESSLY” COME FROM?” (Yuusuke)

“The last rumor is probably related to Isotta, because I heard it in the street stall market street.” (Fonke)

“People in the city say that you were forcing yourself on a frightened Isotta.” (Fonke)

It seemed that Fonke had remembered that Yuusuke was in Isotta’s house, when he was searching for him because of the emergency dispatchment orders. He seemed to have mixed it with other rumors and greatly over exaggerated the situation. And of course, the person himself (Yuusuke) did not found this conversation funny.

“Captain~, it’s not good to use force yourself on the girls~” (Fonke)

“You should be gentle with the girls.” (Vermeer)

“Hey, guys, wait a bit…” (Yuusuke)

Fonke and Vermeer were overdoing it. Aisha was ordered by the princess not to interfere, as Violet herself was just watching the bullying while Shaheed was just sitting silently not saying a word during the entire conversation.

“Why are you speaking about brute force? He was certainly using his strength at first, but… captain was trying to be kind!” (Isotta)

SILENCE

The resting room fell into a complete silence as Isotta tried to help Yuusuke out by explain the situation, omitting some key points like “he was carrying the luggage” or “it did not mean that I was angry just because I was silent”.

“Uhm…. Yuusuke, if you want to play around, there are plenty of nightsingers in the city. It is better to not go after the inexperienced ones.

“If you want, I can get you some of the palace girls,” added Violet, barely containing her laugh from all these gossips.

“Since you are a man, I understand that you are interested in such acts. However, I think you should keep it in moderation.” (Sun)

Although Sun said it in a calm voice, her shoulders were shaking.

“You guys, CAN YOU STOP DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS?!” (Yuusuke)

It was a rare day when Yuusuke was being picked upon.

***

At the bank of a huge lake in the southern part of Fonclanc, an armed group of ten men, dressed in Gazzetta uniforms, were wrapping up the final discussions about their raid plan for the next artless village.

During their last attack a noble had escaped along with several servants. They received

a report that the pursuit group that chased after them was destroyed. The report was sent by a single person of the pursuit group that managed to survive. However the contents of the report were troublesome.

“Did captain of the Fonclanc’s evil god corps and Shinha, king of Gazzetta really joined forces…?” (Attack group member A)

“Think about it for a little bit” (Attack group member B)

Commanding officer groaned since king Shinha had to be involved in this if actions of the artless soldiers were coordinated with the movements of the evil god corps. His underlings seemed to agree with him.

According to their collaborators in Gazzetta, the army movements that were obvious before had become hard to read. Since such unexpected events occurred it became very dangerous to continue acting in the enemy territory.

As they could not make their decision on the spot, they opted to temporarily return to their country.

“Really, the existence of the evil god corps in a pain in the butt…” (Attack group member A)

Even if they were still new, Volmes sighed after losing three useful soldiers and issued a retreat order.

Chapter 41: Under the water surface

"So then, the compensation will be like that."

The secret informal talks are being held underground in Sanc Adiet, and the enacted date will be set at a later date, which will be carried out at Deernook fortress by Queen Risha and King Esvosbus.

During the meeting, a discussion about the compensation to the Gearhawk fortress victims' families was also held. It was decided that Blue Garden will be paying the full compensation to the bereaved families. The compensation would be taken from the private properties of the previous Supreme leader officer Izapnar as funds, but when Blue Garden officials went to check up on the properties, about half of them had disappeared.

Mostly likely, it had been the work of the missing elite members of the "Flame troupe" on the day of the internal conflict. Fortunately, the amount of jewelry and precious metals that was left was enough to meet the agreed amount of compensation.

After settling the talks regarding Gearhawk fortress, the two countries moved on to the topic about the immediate threat, Gazzetta. King Esvosbus began the topic by starting from the recent incident that had occurred in Fonclanc's territories, and questioned the involvement of Gazzetta, in order to gain some hints about the truth from Risha's reactions.

"I believe that they are not responsible for the attacks."(Risha)

"Is it because your highness knows the personality of the king, can I interpret it like that?"(Esvosbus)

"I will only tolerate so much."(Risha)

"Hmmm….."

In fact, it is not openly known, but King Esvosbus knows about Yuusuke's group movement and Shinha's visit to the city. He also knew that Yuusuke is the genuine evil god, and that Zeshald had requested the production of a sacred treasure. Even the aides of the king didn't know about it. The information source was by the self-proclaimed forest person. (TL notes: LOL Reifold)

"Just a little, would it be okay if I talked about something deep."

As he said that, the people within the meeting room were cleared out by King Esvosbus, and he began to ask about the personal relationships between Gazzetta's king and Queen Risha.

"To pry into this, what will the lady do about Gazzetta, King Shinha, and how will you face him, could you tell us the truth?"

"So it's about Shinha, eh…."(Risha)

After showing some hesitation, Risha began to talk about her feelings towards Shinha.

“Shinha is….er, Gazzetta’s king is, possessed by the spirits of old.”(Risha)

He views the white family’s prosperity and the divine arts user’s decline are two sides of a coin, with Kaltcio’s life being tied to the teachings of the so called “correct history” of the flow, as Risha explained the in-depth knowledge of what she knew of Gazzetta.

Risha’s ideal is an realization of coexistence and co-prosperity with the artless, in order to release Shinha from the curse of the white family.

“That is maybe because of the 4 great gods’ faith~~”

The Queen of Blue Garden started the preface from the secrets of Gazzetta. When Risha was young, her father, the king, together with the previous King of Gazzetta, spent their time together in the village of the white family to understand the secret about the origins of the 4 great god’s faith.

For the sake of appearances, they put to use the concept of the 4 great gods, but Risha herself recognized that the concept itself was not use.

“....that is.”(Esvosbus)

“ A long time ago, an evil god named “Wizard” descended in Kaltcio . The 4 great gods’ faith was a hoax faith that was forged by the hands of those in power at that time of death of this evil god.”(Risha)

The talks were currently happening at Deernook fortress, as Queen Risha and King Esvosbus didn’t have the means to overturn the common sense of this world. At the very same time, in the middle district of the city of Sanc Adiet, an invention of great influence to the industrial part of the world had been born in Sorzak’s shop.

“Although the 2nd stage of the shifting have not been achieved, but…..”

“Isn’t it great for the first prototype, our next plan will be to increase the output gradually.”

The completion of the prototype gearbox. Customized by Yuusuke, the gears and shafts, and all the other parts were resistant to wear and tear, and the lubricating oil also benefited from it by creating a quiet specification which was great.

As it is currently, Yuusuke made use of his customization and duplicated a copy of the entirety of it, allowing them to continue their research, and leaving one with Sorzak while making another to incorporate into his vehicle back at his place to further research of the practical uses of it.

“Well, I will see you next month.”(Yuusuke)

“Yeah, I will look forward to the research results of it being integrated into the moving vehicle.”(Sorzak)

After returning to his room in the palace, Yuusuke began looking around his room for

the appropriate items. The prototype gearbox uses the gimmick function to strengthen the rotation force of the gears that surround the motor, a shaft approximately 40cm in length, is projecting out from the box.

Although the rotational speed was lacking, but the power seems to have increased.

"Ng….for now, let me try mounting something on it."(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke began looking at a reasonable 'vehicle', and started to tamper with it by adding a built-in prototype gearbox within his customization menu.

"Yuusuke! Did you create something interesting?"(Violet)

Yuusuke had returned from Sorzak's store, hearing Violet's arrival, he used his feet to block the swinging of the door.

Yuusuke was sitting on the sofa, and at that rate he quickly traverse to the front door. He did that by modifying the leg frame of the sofa with a mobile function and connected the gearbox with power-like wheels. A prototype ' power-assist sofa'. He was about to begin his free-running experiment.

"wawawa, What is that~!"(Violet)

Delighted by the moving sofa, Violet jumped onto Yuusuke's lap,"let me try it too".

"Oi oi, ….. whether this would move or not, though the power shouldn't be a problem."(Yuusuke)

"Sun! Come here too."(Violet)

"EH!"

"eh?"

Violet's call was responded by a stunned voice, Yuusuke immediately turns his head towards the voice and saw Sun, standing there at the door. In fact, Sun was being brought along. This time around, she was dressed in a completely familiar yet un-familiar dress. , Because of that, she hesitated to enter the room.

"Erm, then….sorry to intrude."(Sun)

"Wai…t"(Yuusuke)

Sun gently sat down onto Yuusuke's left lap, next to Violet who was on the right lap.

"Oh, it seems that it's okay for 3 people to ride it."(Violet)

"This is amazing."(Sun)

Hearing a phrase that he couldn't remember where he heard from, as he was trying to recall, the power of the prototype gearbox somehow self-propelled the sofa forward, thus Yuusuke came to the conclusion that the experiment was a success. As long as the research proceeded in this state, the horse-carriage which he had envisioned initially is

not far off.

“Yuusuke-san, your leg, is it alright?”(Sun)(TL notes: Some fella posted a comment saying mister/mr is too england, and wanted it to be more japanese.)

Sun had been captivated by the moving sofa, as she recalled Yuusuke’s silence from earlier. She realized, “Am I heavy?”

“Ah, that’s isn’t the problem though….”(Yuusuke)

“Fufufu, there isn’t a need to worry Sun, Yuusuke is enjoying the warmth of our asses.”

“EH!”(Sun)

“OI!”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke showed an angry ‘you should get off’ face, and realised it was ‘useless’ to get through with Violet. Sun tried to hide her face in shyness.

Krielov who was an exclusive guard and teacher of Violet was walking around the palace looking for her, and heard the usual racket that was happening in Yuusuke’s room.

“As I expected, you are here again Princess, it is soon time for your tuition~~”(Krielov)

Violet and Sun were both sitting atop of Yuusuke’s lap, while the sofa which he was sitting on was moving around the room in circles making a rumbling noise. Krielov, who had just witnessed the sight, stood there paralyzed for a few seconds. After that few seconds, he had grown accustomed to it.

“Awww after my long awaited fun~~!”(Violet)

“Don’t say something so selfish.”(Krielov)

Krielov took the princess and dragged her away as she threw her child tantrum, while Yuusuke saw them off with a ‘thanks for your hard work’ in his heart. Now left behind, Sun and Yuusuke smiled awkwardly at each other, as they began to enjoy a casual conversation.

“Have you gotten accustomed to the life in the palace?”(Yuusuke)

“Yes, but there is so much luxury here, I might not be able to get used to the life in the village afterwards, the thought of it is scary.”(Sun)

“I see, it is true.”(Yuusuke)

The daily preparations of drawing water and meals for living in the palace were being done by the servants, even the change of clothes were being taken care of, and one would become dull after everything is done for them.

“After seeing the state of Shinha previously, I doubt he will try to prey on Sun again, but…… since the current situation had ended, do you want to visit Rufk?”(Yuusuke)

“Well….ah, but it’s bad to intrude onto teacher.”(Sun)

“Pfft. That reminds me, I am so forgetful.”(Yuusuke)

“And, it seems returning will be troublesome.”(Sun)

Even with a high speed traveling assisted soldier carriage, the round trip to Rufk village will be inconvenient as it is too time-consuming.

Although he could use the instant transfer method which he had previously used at the Great Wall of Paula, but it requires a huge amount of cornerstones to be laid down and connected to the village, thus it wasn’t very realistic.

On the other hand, Yuusuke began envisioning the potential of the continuous instant movement of his customization capabilities .

“It currently is only in the image stage, though I have the method to clear the material problem.”(Yuusuke)

If the city had its structure similar to Sanc Adiet, even if it wasa floor stone, it could be easily replaced through instant movement. To come up with such interesting ideas, just by imagination, the small amount material it would appear in ridiculous amount of efficiency.

“Well either way, the prerequisite of the customization ability is that it is only limited to me.”(Yuusuke)

Currently, the research on it’s power is underway by Sorzak. It had plans to run in a bus type vehicle to carry large number of people throughout Kaltico.

In the first place, it was Sorzak’s and Yuusuke’s delusion that became the cornerstone for future development.

“For the time being, let’s head into the city to check if they have any decent things.”(Yuusuke)

“So are we heading to the city with this moving chair?”(Sun)

“Nope, although it’s interesting in it’s own way, but….”(Yuusuke)

While Sun was imagining the scene of the city, Yuusuke was first thinking about the creations of Violet’s go-cart, as he started dismantling the power sofa.

In the centre of Kaltico was a gigantic lake. Being called the “Mirror of the moon”, an ancient country which is located on the opposite shore across the lake, Nossentes.

Deep within the ancient capital city of Pato Rutiar North, there stood a building which played a pivotal role. This building is known as the God Discussion Hall, and all the decision makers known as the “God Parliament” members gathered there everyday to debate on the policies that were to be carried out.

In Nosentess, from the ancient city, 2 people amongst the Divine art users were elected

to become the representative and a member of the God Parliament, and they were to be centered around the congress which governs the nation, although it seems to be elected by the general public, in actual fact it was a dictatorship by the minority.

"Well then, the report for the other time but…..Gazzetta's forces and that Darkness god corp's captain seems to have a connection."

"According to the intel our spies had gathered, Gazzetta had been trying to lure the darkness god corp's unique divine arts user to their country."

"The darkness god captain, so called "Yuusuke", was he brought up in the village of the artless?"

"It seems that Gazzetta is trying to make use of that…."

Although it seems that he had encouraged an ordinance promulgated to protect the Artless, first we need to analyze and link a series of actions on whether or not he is related to the artless. Even if we were to be linked, the connections between Gazzetta and Fonclanc, it will just benefit Gazzetta.

'If that's the case, before Gazzetta take actions into their hands, we(Nossentes) should strike from our side.' As the heated argument about who was up for the task of investigating the identity of 'Yuusuke' who is the captain of the Darkness God Corp.

"How about we let Gazzetta's handle with "Yuusuke" being the evil god?"

"Is he really the evil god or not, it is an unexpected outcome if we were to elevate the status of the evil god."

"But, if "Ayuukatsu" is still alive and somewhere in Gazzetta predicted this, it most likely is real."

"In that case, either we somehow get hold of the evil god, or it must be destroyed."

Like the white family, they also know about the reality of the evil god and its roles, their clans were responsible for governing Nossentes since ancient times in the form of a God parliament, this knowledge had been handed down through the generations.

"Ayuukatsu.Ikudouto" a tradition that informs the people to continue their search for the advent of the evil god.

"It seems that 'Ayuukatsu' is being concealed in the village where the white family resides, it's location is still unknown, so there is no way to confirm the information…."

"How are we going to make a move on Blue Garden…."

"That country had just been knockup by Fonclanc, it will be splitted up from now on, soon enough it will disappear."

In order to prevent the decline of Artless within the country of Fonclanc and to flow into Gazzetta, under the pretext of execution from Gazzetta, they disguise it as an Fonclanc's conspiracy that the Gazzetta's army had attacked, this was the cover conspiracy that was implemented by Nossentes.

Using exile from Blue Garden as a guise, Volmes was pulling the strings on the final stages which had unfold between Fonclanc and leading Gazzetta in, finally adding Blue garden into a 3 way fight which was scheduled ploy from Nossentes, But it was temporarily interrupted due to the awareness about the change in the current situation.

In the birthplace of the 4 great god's faith, the descendant's of the founder of the gods religion, began analyzing the information found around the Darkness God captain, as they reviewed the conclusions that were given to them by the higher ups.

"Now, about the current direction and capturing the Darkness God captain, is it viable?"

"Hmmm….we have no problem with it."

The council had decided on the plan to capture Yuusuke, a too classic strategy, which causes one person to sigh.

"Seriously, when will the time change, to call on a presence which refers to as a hero, lusting over the unknown."

Chapter 42: Singing Princesses of Sanc Adiet

A few days back, King Esvosbus had returned from the conference about the agreements and arrangements of compensation that were to be announced and made by Blue Garden. Originally it wasn't prohibited, but by anticipating the situation, many of the merchants had been restraining on trading great amount of goods.

Now, after the announcement, the distribution that had once been stalled had become active again, thus the prices of goods began to stabilize in both the cities of Fonclanc and Blue Garden.

"Hey, isn't this Yuusuke."(Hivodir)

As it was about time to create the next set of rings, Yuusuke left the palace and headed towards the city to do some material shopping, while passing the streets of the noble district, he met Hivodir.

"Yo, have you recovered from your injuries?"(Yuusuke)

"I was already healed up on that day by water arts, and I have been on a sick leave since. However I am pretty much alright."(Hivodir)

"Are you heading down to the city again?", Hivodir, who was interested in the commoner district, joined up with him and the two of them were silly chatting while walking along the street. Hivodir, who normally uses his personal carriage to go to the city, had recently began to use his feets to walk instead.

As they were approaching the middle class district's gate, Hivodir voiced out when he noticed a number of footsteps from a girl coming towards them from the corner of the street.

"Well well, Rasanasha dono. You're as beautiful as ever today."(Hivodir)

"Ara, Hivodir. Long time no see."(Rasanasha)

"Who's this?" Yuusuke asked, "She's a singing princess" answered Hivodir. In Sanc Adiet, there are 6 singing princess, and she is the 3rd rank singing princess.(TL notes: High class prost)

Her eyes and hair were light blue (water like) color, with her hair extending towards her waist while waving ever so slightly. Her appearance was reminiscenting of Queen Risha of Blue Garden, and she doesn't have the commoner like atmosphere surrounding her that one would expect of a person of this status.

"By any chance, are you heading to King Esvosbus's place today?"(Hivodir)

"No, I have been called on by some official from above."(Rasanasha)

Recently, she had been called on often by the officials who had attended the meeting at Deernook Fortress. "Oh I see", as Hivodir nodded in agreement. Rasanasha who was wearing a designer dress was more or less showing a wry smile.

"Well then, I am in a rush."(Rasanasha)

"Ah, sorry for holding you up."(Hivodir)

"Yuusuke sama too, will you excuse me? ."(Rasanasha)

Yuusuke and gang saw her off, as the figure of the palace carriage that came to pick her up disappeared into the distance. Hivodir blew her a farewell kiss after whispering something.

"As I thought, she is playing the part of Blue Garden's Queen."(Hivodir)

"Wait What?"(Yuusuke)

Not knowing what he meant, Yuusuke tilted his head in confusion, while Hivodir was making a proud stroking gesture on his chin.

"Yuusuke, most likely you do not seem to know what kind of story it is about, let me explain the overview of that entire conversation which just happened."(Hivodir)

"Do as you like."(Yuusuke)

According to Hivodir's explanation, it seems that the expensive and beautiful dress was a request by the senior government officials who had attended the Blue Garden meeting, as her clientele is gradually increasing along with those who requested it, thus the wry smile at the end.

In short, her blue hair and eyes, during her service time of being a singing princess, the story of her resembling the Queen of Blue Garden.

"So it's Imekura!"(Yuusuke)

(TL notes: sex establishment in which staff dress in costumes (schoolgirl, nurse, etc.))

All of the sudden, Yuusuke had plunged into the depths of the sex industry in this world.

Rasanasha had arrived at the private room in the residence of a certain earl who had summoned her. This house had a visit rate of once per month, singing princess who haven't fulfilled her duties here will sooner or later end up visiting.

Only a single luxurious canopy bed is placed in the center of the simple, yet luxuriously decorative room. After the thick and heavy curtain fell and covered the window, the lord of the house was being called.

"It's working time, nasha."

".....yes."(Rasanasha)

"The instructions from the Parliament of god, to cause the darkness god captain from 」going into exile, this was handed to me by the ambassador that had arrived from Nossentes."

“Exile, is it….?”(Rasanasha)

This particular Earl is a sympathizer of the Nossentus god parliament who is currently in Fonclanc, Rasanasha is a background supporter who uses the singing princess’s identity to gather intel and conciliatory, in order words a special operative.

This time the mission is about the exile of the darkness god captain to Nossentes instead.

“To have him exiled, think bout it, isn’t this an unreasonable time due to his preferential environment?”(Rasanasha)

“Yes, they know, and that’s why it’s time for you to step in.”

While explaining the use of philandering on the Darkness god captain, the Earl sat on his bed. Rasanasha began to kneel in front of the Earl, as she placed her head on his lap. His boorish finger stroke and played with her smooth light blue hair.

“So you have also heard about the rumors.”

“Yes, it seems that such rumors are frequently heard.”

First, by using Rasanasha’s charm to captivate the darkness god captain into temptation. However, this has to be done with the priority of maintaining an appropriate distance so that Princess Violet would not become suspicious about it.

Implicitly, within the conversation, an appeal, “to be open Nossentes to part of the genders”, not before long she would finally be able to return to her birthplace of Nossentes, saying that as she might be interested.

A hint that an aristocrat of Nossentes is proposing, ”I don’t really want to go back as my little sister is here.” Showing a face full of sorrow, “My younger sister, unlike me, is just a normal unrelated girl, while I am a harlot” as it slipped out of her mouth unintentionally.

The person holding onto the title of “younger sister” is currently a “Favourite” of the Darkness God Captain, from the information she had gathered.

On the other hand, to work for the Earl who was a high official of the palace regarding Gazzetta’s Military threat. As they were worshipping the same 4 major gods unlike Gazzetta, it created an atmosphere for them to cooperate, thus a goodwill ambassador was dispatched from Nossentes to tempt the Darkness God captain.

The mission for Rasanasha was to bind the heart of Darkness god captain and bring him to Nossentes, while it’s the Earl opportunity to send the darkness God corps away.

“Leave the methods to me, I will captivate him.”

“I got it.”

Her cheek was gentle stroke across the Earls lap as she looks up towards the Earl. This signal normally is the cue of the end. It seems that the Earl had changed a little, the mood is filled with only “stroking of a woman’s hair.”

"Also, this month's portion. For the body maintenance."

"Ah….yes, Thank you."

The Earl took out a vial of deep blue of liquid, Rasanasha took it and put it into her bosom and left the mansion.

After purchasing the rings, Yuusuke headed towards the middle class district where the Sorzak's store is at. Along the wall overlooking the commoner district, Rasanasha could be seen leaning on the handrail of the fence.

It seems that she was wearing a different kind of atmosphere compared to the morning, as she stared into the horizon.

"Ara, Hello."(Rasanasha)

"Oh, Hi."(Yuusuke)

As though he could naturally feel it, Yuusuke had been trying to hide his face as her natural smile seems to be directed at him.

"Shopping?"(Rasanasha)

"Yeah, well."(Yuusuke)

A thin layer of makeup, a small trace of perfume that one could hardly notice, and she had almost no accessories on her.

Rather than a beauty whereby one feels difficult to approach, she had a feeling of a beautiful woman with natural cuteness. She had a naive smile which could calm and reassure any person. Yuusuke had such an impression towards Rasanasha.

As she was planning to head home, and since the direction that she was heading was the same as Sorzak's store, she decided to take a stroll with him while having a little chat.

"But, don't count on me for rumors, cause it seems like Yuusuke-sama is causing more terror."

"I won't ask what kind of rumors are those….."(Yuusuke)

"Ufufu, just awhile ago it was actually the first time I met you, in my mind, I was all jumpy you know?"

Having the job as a singing princess, Rasanasha was prideful of her "charming appeal as a woman", while there were rumors in the city about the Darkness God Captain being philandering, which have likely caused terror.

"Is it me, or are they avoiding eye contact."(Yuusuke)

"Yeah~"

But at that rate, they continue their cheerful talks and reached Sorzak's shop. Yuusuke

was so engrossed in the talks that he felt that the time passed by so quickly.

"So then, I am heading off."(Rasanasha)

"Yeah, see ya later."(Yuusuke)

With a light nod, he saw off Rasanasha as she headed towards the other side of the street, as he turned around and rang the bell of the shop.

"Ding Dong" as the bell resounded, Sorzak immediately rushed out from the inner store counter.

"That lady just now! Isn't she a singing princess?"(Sorzak)

"Ah, yes, but."(Yuusuke)

"Did, did you buy her service?"(Sorzak)

"No of course not!"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke began to explain to Sorzak who was taken aback, he met her a while back at the park, and came here while chatting with her.

Sorzak's on the other hand had a very jealous look on his face. It seems that not even palace officials could lay their hands on a singing princess, they are only available to extremely high ranking officials, an ultra-luxury night singer, thus he showed envy from the side because Yuusuke was personally acquainted with one.

"Yet again the rumors are gonna increase."(Sorzak)

"Come on, gimme a break…."(Yuusuke)

For some reason, Sorzak voice was monotonic, while Yuusuke was tired with all the nonsense about being a playboy.

"Don't tell me you have already developed this kind of relationship with the princess~~and are making use of the street songs?"

"No, not at all."(Yuusuke)

"Eh, Seriously? Not even the slightest? In any chance did the princess forbid you? (Sorzak)

"Nope, I am just not into those kind of things…."(Yuusuke)

Sorzak placed his hands on his chin, while tilting his head to one side, after a while, he dropped his fist onto the palm of his hand with smile showing that he came to a conclusion.

"Ahh! Certainly to be interested only in children~~"(Sorzak)(TL note: wanted to put LOLICON)

"THAT'S NOT IT!"(Yuusuke)

"A...are you interested in guys then~~?"(Sorzak)

"DEFINITELY NOT!"(Yuusuke)

Due to being extremely jealous of Yuusuke who had easily chatted with his longing of a singing princess, Sorzak was desperately trying to find a fault.

Yuusuke returned to his room in the palace, and worked on the rings of divine arts in one go without rest. And yet again today, Violet had brought Sun as an attendant to play with his experimental products, and she began to grumble as the day ended.

"Don't impulsively get entwined."(Violet)

"Awawa a certain significance, but it isn't that way."(Yuusuke)

The singing princess is said to be a symbol of luxury, it is said that many man would yearn to be warped in their sexual tenderness.

"Yuusuke-san are you not interested in women?"(Sun)

"You seem pretty anxious, but please stop, Sun."(Yuusuke)

Being normally interested, it appealed to Yuusuke.

"Is it because, you haven't even kissed Sun once?"(Violet)

"! Violet-sama! I am not particularly thinking about…."(Sun)

"No, huh. No, huh."(Violet)

"Ki ah please not ther….! Yan"(Sun) (TL note:tickling)

Like this and like that, Violet begin playing(tickling) with Sun's whole body. To be allowed to be playfully playing like that at such age could only be found in this room throughout the palace.

Within the room 'Kyakya' noises could be heard, "What's happening!" one could not help but to contain their feeling to not look.

"Since it had turned to this point, why are you still shy, aren't you aware of your own feelings?"(Violet)

"Eh,arm, that…."(Sun)

Violet hugged her from behind and whispered into her ears, causing Sun to become flustered and turn red. Although both of them were women, looking at the extreme skinship contact, Yuusuke sighed as he peeled Violet away from her.

"Sun, your reaction is too obvious. Violet, don't tease her too much."(Yuusuke)

"....this fella is the number one most dense fella ever."(Violet)

"Ng?"

Whether he’s deliberately unaware or not, that frank outspoken speech that just happened, Yuusuke tilted his head showing that he was wondering what had happened, and Violet who saw that shrugged it off with a grumble.

“Even Sun will have many hardships.”(Violet)

“.....”

Chapter 43: Medicine, doubts, and a peaceful night

"Oi, g'evening~" (Yuusuke)

"Oh, good evening Yuusuke-sama. We are meeting quite often these days." (Rasanasha)

A few days had gone by since the Darkness God Corps had resumed their usual patrols. Since then Yuusuke somehow came to encounter Rasanasha frequently during his patrols in the middle class and commoner districts.

This time however, they did not simply pass each other by on the street as before. As they were acquaintances now (or at least Yuusuke thought so), they stopped to exchange a few words.

"Are you working today as well?" (Rasanasha)

"Well, yeah. Have you heard anything interesting today?" (Yuusuke)

Rasanasha changed the topic towards her work by replying "Everything is as usual in Sanc Adiet, but I have heard that a new brothel was opened in Nossentes." To Yuusuke, Rasanasha's shop looked to be a kind of a massage house, the kind of industry that he had no experience with. (T.N. katakana read [Soapland] (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soapland)

"Nossentes, eh?" (Yuusuke)

"To tell the truth, I come from Patrutia Nost myself." (Rasanasha)

Rasanasha's story caught Yuusuke's interest so he continued listening to the woman speaking about her family without interrupting her. She spoke of having a younger sister, who was a simple girl back at her birthplace, about how her sister knew about her occupation (singing princess), and about how they argued about it on the rare occasions that she returned home.

"She is probably worried about her older sister." (Yuusuke)

"I think so as well" (Rasanasha)

["I should not ask why she took on this job,"] thought Yuusuke to himself as he was enjoying the conversation. Suddenly Rasanasha's body shuddered. She swayed as if she was drowsy and clutched an area around her stomach.

"Ah… this, I am sorry, give me a moment." (Rasanasha)

As she said that, she turned her back towards Yuusuke, took a bottle of medicine from her purse, and drank a little bit of it. Afterwards she used healing art on the area that she felt pain.

["And I drank the medicine this morning too… The spasms seem to be becoming more frequent lately…"] (Rasanasha)

Rasanasha was very worried about this, but after feeling the effect of the healing art

starting to spread, she managed to calm down a little bit.

"Are you alright? Is something wrong?" (Yuusuke)

"No, I mean… it's something I have had for a long time." (Rasanasha)

Rasanasha tried to evade the question, fearing that Yuusuke would lose interest in her after learning of her chronic disease. However Yuusuke was genuinely worried for his acquaintance thus he offered to introduce her to an exceptional healer that he knew.

"His healing skills are the real deal. Maybe you have heard of him as well, his name is Zeshald." (Yuusuke)

"Ah, I know of him. He is the former royal divine arts instructor, right?" (Rasanasha)

Worried about the more frequent spasms, and thinking that this might be a chance to get closer to Yuusuke, Rasanasha accepted Yuusuke's offer and asked to be examined by Zeshald.

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The next day Rasanasha came to the palace. Yuusuke talked the matter over with Violet the night before so the preparations to go to Zeshald's place were already complete. All that was left for the woman and the members of the Darkness God Corps was to board the palace knight's carriage.

It was unheard of for a palace knight corps to employ the carriage to escort a singing princess, moreover it was done on a personal whim. Thus members from other knight's corps as well as other people of higher status, who had descended to the carriage floor, were staring at the members of the Darkness God Corps with envious eyes.

At first Violet was shocked, when Yuusuke requested to take a singing princess to Rufk, but after hearing about Rasanasha's situation she finally gave her consent. Afterwards she asked for Sun's consent and left with her with Yuusuke saying "I'll leave her to you."

She suspected that there was something else hidden beneath that woman's reasons. For a singing princess, becoming sick would greatly affect her reputation. Even if she said that her illness was not contagious, for someone such as a singing princess, they could not avoid the looks of suspicion and contempt of other people.

"We're good to go guys, don't forget to keep this a secret, okay?" (Rasanasha?)

"Hahaha, leave the cover up for me!" (Violet)

"Aaah… I also wanted to go with them…" (Hivodir)

Krielov stared at the three people with strange expressions on their faces. Meanwhile, he was considering Violet's actions. Her actions were different from the usual princess' tantrums, whose main purpose was to tease someone.

["Princess will do the cover up by herself, eh?… This is child's play, so the decision was easy, however…"] (Krielov)

Krielov was wondering of whether or not this had shown some sort of growth within the princess, thus the amount of wrinkles on his forehead was constantly changing.

***

The carriage with the party was riding on the highway that stretched towards the direction of their destination. The tension inside the vehicle was high, as Aisha was riding in the same carriage as a singing princess, a type of person she would never look at, much less speak to. Before boarding, Fonke looked at Aisha and blurted out "It would be perfect if she became a member afterwards," and every now and then he would steal glances at the woman while pretending to concentrate on the wind arts that were necessary to run the carriage.

Vermeer was clutching the reins, not as dissatisfied as one might have expected him to be, and Shaheed was silently watching the tense atmosphere as it had become a habit of his by now. Aisha and Isotta were the most nervous of the bunch, stealing quick glances at their unexpected companion. Meanwhile, Yuusuke and Sun were engaged in friendly chatter with Rasanasha.

"The two of you seem to have complete trust in Zeshald—" (Rasanasha)

"Yes, teacher is a very good person." (Sun)

"He might be mischievous at times, but he gives off the feeling of a gentle grandfather." (Yuusuke)

However, the person himself was not in any way similar to the "gentle grandfather". When the relations with the neighboring country of Blue Garden deteriorated, he pretended to betray Fonclanc and traveled to the enemy country. He was a "man of valor" who had even gained the queen's trust, formed a group to oppose the anti-Fonclanc faction, and destroyed it from within. And he did all of this alone.

A count had warned her "to not lower her guard" when she serviced him the other day. Although she managed to hide it from the two companions, she was feeling some tension regarding the meeting with Zeshald and the unavoidable questions that she would have to answer.

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"Oh, Yuusuke, and Sun." (Zeshald)

"I'm home, teacher." (Sun)

"Heiyo~" (Yuusuke)

When the Darkness God Corps party reached Rufk village, the sun was already setting. Guards, stationed at the village, were notified in advance (through the use of wind arts) about the upcoming visitors, so Zeshald seemed to have finished his preparations for the medical examination.

Due to the recent attacks, makeshift barracks were built in the village and a simple fortress like structure was constructed within the area, surrounded by a protective trench. All the defenses were similar to what was usually used against armed groups.

“Ah, Belushya-san.” (Sun)

Belushya was tending the field, it seemed that she had successfully taken over Sun’s usual tasks. This was a new kind of experience for Belushya – instead of taking lives to survive, she would now tend for them, harvest what she had grown, and plant the seeds again.

Sun was looking at the fields and talking with Belushya who, for some unknown reason, was wearing a maid uniform. Vermeer and the rest of the corps turned towards the temporary barracks while Fonke took Rasanasha’s luggage in an attempt to tag along with Yuusuke. By the way, Bahana had become the center of attention within the temporary barracks because everyone was captivated by her cooking.

“It’s unfair for captain alone to g—“ (Fonke)

Aisha stepped on Fonke’s foot. Yuusuke sighed at the sight of his quarreling subordinates.

“That guy, he will go anywhere when his precious singing princesses are involved.” (Aisha)

“Ufufu, our songs are only used to comfort the partner overnight. The magic is gone, once things become serious.” (Rasanasha)

Thinking that this had somehow added fuel to the fire, Yuusuke escorted Rasanasha to Zeshald’s house.

“You seem to be doing fine.” (Yuusuke)

“I can say the same about you.” (Zeshald)

Having arrived at the guest room which had been transformed into an examination room, Zeshald sat on the chair, directing the rest of the group to sit on the sofa, and then began to activate his divine arts. He used his healing arts to examine the inside of Rasanasha’s body, trying to find the source of her illness.

“Hmm, this seems to be rot disease. (朽病)” (Zeshald)

“… …Yes.” (Rasanasha)

In a gloomy mood Rasanasha nodded to Zeshald’s confirmation. Rasanasha’s illness was [Rot disease]. Although the illness itself was not too common, it usually caused tumors to develop and spread within one’s body. It was an illness that caused a range of other complications and finally led to the person’s demise.

Healing arts could alleviate some of the symptoms, but a moderately strong art was needed in order to do so. It was also said that complete recovery from this illness was not possible.

[“It looks similar to cancer…”] (Yuusuke)

“Hmm… it seems to be quite advanced… Did you bring the adjuvant medicine?” (Zeshald)

“Ah, yes… Here it is.” (Rasanasha)

Zeshald took a sip from the medicine bottle that Rasanasha gave him and drank a little bit of it, sloshing the liquid within his mouth. Using healing arts along with adjuvant medicine could greatly reduce the rate at which the rot illness spread within the body.

Being a water arts user herself, Rasanasha was able to feel the tumor in her body by herself. However, until yesterday she thought it to be much smaller.

[“As expected of the former royal divine arts instructor,”] thought the women, admiring Zeshald’s skills.

“Were you using this medicine yesterday?” (Zeshald)

“Yes, that’s right.” (Rasanasha)

Since Yuusuke saw Rasanasha holding the same medicine yesterday, he had inquired about it. It seemed to be a very expensive medicine that was only available in Nossentes. It was nearly impossible to obtain it here in Fonclanc as it was rarely imported by traders. This was because it was difficult to obtain as the quantity available was always insufficient. Rasanasha’s bottle was already half empty when Yuusuke asked to take a look at it.

“Hmm, let me see…” (Yuusuke)

Zeshald silently watched over Yuusuke, who was examining the item in his customization menu. Rasanasha was lost at how quickly the focus of the room shifted to Yuusuke and her eyes were jumping between the two men.

Yuusuke confirmed the status of the medicine.

“It belongs to the healing enchantment type and does not bring out an immediate effect.” (Yuusuke)

“You can customize that as well?” (Zeshald)

“Well, in theory… But this seems to be quite a strong medicine.” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke hinted that this was a strong medicine that had a heavy impact on the patient’s body, so tampering with it bore some risks. This made Zeshald think what effects could such a customized medicine, coupled with healing arts of his level, bring out.

“Since the production method is held secret by Nossentes, wouldn’t it be good to produce a better medicine that helped the ill?” (Zeshald)

Because he felt that he could assure the patient’s safety, Zeshald urged Yuusuke to take a go at customizing the medicine. Yuusuke groaned, while thinking. He was troubled that he could not obtain a sufficient amount that one would want, considering that the medicine was not available in Fonclanc.

[“There are probably more people that are suffering from this too. Should I go to Nossentes to procure more of this medicine?”] (Yuusuke)

"It seems that the quickest way will be for me to go and buy the medicine myself." (Yuusuke)

"Mhm, there will also be other useful medicine sold there. It would be best if you confirmed the usefulness yourself." (Zeshald)

Unable to comprehend their conversation, Rasanasha was only staring at them, waiting for whatever conclusion would come out of the discussion.

"Then I will consult with Violet about it. Maybe I can turn this into an official business trip to Nossentes." (Yuusuke)

Rasanasha was shocked by the sudden reason for traveling to Nossentes. And then a doubt appeared within her mind.

["Maybe Yuusuke-sama isn's actually a womanizer the rumors say he is?"]

That timid looking transmission type wind arts user, who her superior had forced himself on, seemed to be looking at him with something more than only respect in her eyes. The artless girl, who for some reason was living in the palace, also not only held faith in Yuusuke but also seemed to hold feelings for him.

In any case, she was able to create a reason for Yuusuke to travel to Nossentes. She had to report it if she managed to return to the city. Thus, Rasanasha had made a mental note of today's events, and her doubts about the intel of the personality of the captain of the Darkness God Corps that she was provided with.

***

That night—

After eating their supper, Yuusuke and Sun, Zeshald and Belushya were together, enjoying the tea, thus spending the evening together. Rasanasha's situation seemed to be serious, so she was made to rest in the guest room.

Zeshald was telling Yuusuke various pieces of information about Nossentes. Having come upon a part of the conversation where he could interrupt the topic, Yuusuke asked a question that was bothering him for some time.

"By the way, why the maid uniform?" said Yuusuke, pointing at Belushya's uniform. One eye hidden by her short blue hair, Belushya gave Yuusuke a faint answer in a barely audible voice.

"… Rood is– He (T.N. Zeshald) said that it looks better this way." (Belushya)

Finishing her reply, Belushya looked at Zeshald.

"Rood?"

"Nh… well that is a name of a pet I had when I was young." (Zeshald)

For a moment, everyone in the room froze. Sun started murmuring something to herself while Yuusuke tried to keep a calm demeanor.

“You are calling her by a pet name?…” (Yuusuke)

“What are you doing sensei?” (Sun)

“Hohoho” (Zeshald)

“… … (The tea is delicious.)” (Belushya)

Thus it was a peaceful evening indeed.

Chapter 44: Hero's irony

"Many thanks for everything. You really made me feel much more at ease." (Rasanasha)

nods "If your condition worsens, come see me anytime." (??)

Yuusuke and co. departed from Rufk early in the morning and managed to return to Sanc Adiet just before noon.

Rasanasha had separated from the group before they arrived at palace, however Fonke, definitely trying to get close to the nightsinger, offered to escort the woman back to her house. Despite his eagerness, he had been promptly returned to the horse handler's seat by Vermeer.

Having obtained their captain's permission, Fonke and Vermeer took the carriage and drove Rasanasha home, while the other members had returned to the knights' resting room. The captain himself walked towards Violet's room to report to her.

"Basically, you want to travel to Nossentes to procure the medicine?" (Violet)

"Mhm." (Yuusuke)

Violet was pondering about Yuusuke's report and his suggestion to travel to Nossentes, only showing a subtle expression on her face.

Yuusuke hung his head low, thinking that such a trip was out of the question after all. However, Krielov informed Yuusuke that the Darkness God Corps are being considered for a new mission of becoming good will ambassadors in Nossentes while delivering the king's personal letter to that country.

"Ambassador?! But… I have no experience whatsoever with these duties that have such serious political implications."

"Weell, we will just have to appoint a suitable person to be the ambassador, so there should be no problems. Isn't that right, Krielov!" (Violet)

Thinking that Violet had made this choice to preserve the face of the Darkness God Corps, Krielov nodded, showing his agreement while admiring the princess deep in his heart. While he was aware of his role, this cooperation between her and Yuusuke was one of those cases of her sharp insight that Violet sometimes showed.

"However, something is bothering me…" (Violet)

"?" (Yuusuke)

Violet seemed to be reluctant to accept Yuusuke's plan. She could understand Yuusuke's reason of procuring medicine for the rot disease, however there was something that had been bothering her, which she could not seem to be able to put into words.

"I don't know how to say this, it seems to me that there is more to all of this." (Violet)

"Is that something like woman's intuition? Or are you perhaps jealous of Rasanasha-

san?” (Yuusuke)

Bashing Yuusuke’s head with the flying saucer for making fun of her, Violet was thinking whether sending Yuusuke to Nossentes was a good idea. After all, Nossentes was suspected of being the puppet master behind the latest attacks.

“By the way, Yuusuke’s mansion should be finished tomorrow, right?” (Violet)

Violet had procured a permit for Yuusuke to build a mansion so that he would be able to provide Sun with her new home. It also seemed that she managed to procure some of the required funds as well.

At the time when the transfer of the ownership of the mansion was to be completed, the negotiations for the appointment of the ambassador should also be done, Krielov was also thinking about the schedule of important events.

“Wouldn’t it be proper to present some kind of reward to the construction workers?” (Yuusuke)

“If you really want to, do it. However, how about you get them some aged strong liquor?” (Violet?)

“That’s a good idea!” replied Yuusuke and immediately left to buy the said alcohol in town.

***

Late at night, avoiding bystanders as much as she could, Rasanasha visited the count’s house. She reported that, with her illness as the main reason, she had achieved their main objective. The count hinted that his attempt at persuading the king to consider the Darkness God Corps for the ambassador duties was also successful.

“Good, the first stage seems to be a huge success.” (Count)

The count also informed Rasanasha of her duties for the next step. Before the Darkness God Corps were announced as the escort for the good-will ambassador, she was to head to the Nossentes villa (別荘) and tell her younger sister about the continuation of the mission. (T.N. No idea as of yet on what this villa is supposed to be.)

“I expect you to continue to excel at your duties.” (Count)

Princess Violet’s influence could not reach beyond Fonclanc. Count’s orders were clear, the “sisters” are to seduce Yuusuke with their skills. Rasanasha showed a slightly disturbed face, thinking [“have I misjudged the character of the captain of the Darkness God Corps before?”]

“Rasanasha, what kind of person do you see yourself as?” (Count)

“Eh? Me? I am a singing princess …” (Rasanasha)

“That’s right, you were granted this position by me. You are my spy.“ (Count)

“…Yes.” (Rasanasha)

Count continued reading the report. He, not Rasanasha, was amongst those that made decisions, thus he continued admonishing Rasanasha to remain faithful to her orders.

"Do you understand? We don't need your opinion. Just do your part, carry out the orders and gather the information. When I will give you the order, start spreading the rumors." (Count)

"Fo-forgive me, I overstepped my duties." (Rasanasha)

"You are forgiven. However, your skill of the trade is applaudable. For a singing princess to lead him around like that…" (Count)

She caused Yuusuke to worry by using her illness and even made him use his connections with Zeshald. Furthermore, she made him travel to Nossentes to procure the expensive medicine for the good of everyone who might have the same disease in the country. To make Yuusuke want to go to the other kingdom for such a humane reason required truly astounding skill.

"To be able to rouse his sympathy like that. You are better than I expected." (Count)

Count thought that the rumors about Yuusuke seducing women were mostly truth, and the person himself would vanish should more rumors like that were to spread.

***

The next day Yuusuke took Sun along to see the completed mansion. The two of them had just arrived at the entrance of their mansion in the upper class district.

The mansion was a three story building that had nearly thirty rooms, including kitchens, servant rooms, guest rooms, and the like. The mansion grounds also included stables, and a carriage shed, wide enough for one to ride on horseback.

"Isn't this a little too big?" (Yuusuke)

"Oh? Are you seeing your mansion for the first time, Yuusuke-san?" (Sun)

It seems that Sun was accustomed to the magnanimity as she had seen the progress of the construction on some occasions when she was being dragged around by Violet, whenever the princess decided to ride around the district in her carriage. Because Yuusuke's duties usually had him working in the lower class districts, it was his first time seeing the place since he decided to request for a mansion.

"Still… looking at it again, it sure is big, eh?" (Sun)

"It sure is. How about we go and check the inside of the building for now?" (Yuusuke)

As the two of them were approaching the gate, the guards saluted Yuusuke. The guards showed slightly perplexed expression on their faces, however Yuusuke did not pay too much attention to them.

Having received a lot of exceptions and indulgences, Yuusuke got used to being treated with questioning and perplexed looks by others. After walking for a bit, they arrived at the huge door that was the main entrance to their mansion. After having entered the mansion, servants, who were lined up at the main hall, greeted them in unison.

“Welcome home, master-sama” (Servants)

“Eh!” (Yuusuke) (T.N. Yuusuke was something like http://goo.gl/gZ78Pg)

“Ah?!” (Sun?)

“No, it’s nothing.” (Yuusuke)

Being called a [“master”], made Yuusuke’s back itch, but thinking back, such a development was inevitable. By the way, in addition to the gatekeepers and the servants, Yuusuke now also had a private coach driver, and guards, tasked with the management of the mansion. This extravagance was truly befitting of someone from a distinguished family.

Making a mental note to request the staff to change the way they address him, Yuusuke started to look around the mansion. Corridors stretched to both sides and twin staircases could be seen at the back of the hall. There were no sculptures, paintings or other works of art that usually adorned the walls of such buildings and the ornaments were simplistic, but the atmosphere in the hall was by no means untasteful.

Although unable to calm down because of the retro style that the hall gave off, Yuusuke felt that the decorations were “just right”.

“Hmm…”

Suddenly seeing perplexed looks on the servant’s faces, Yuusuke followed their eyes. They were all looking at Sun like some sort of unwanted object.

Apparently, some servants could not comprehend the fact that an artless would be living in the mansion that they were serving in. They started whispering amongst themselves (not trying to hide it) that the rumor about the captain of the Darkness God Corps having an artless woman as a concubine might indeed be true.

Although they (Yuusuke and Sun) had some sort of relation to Zeshald, in the eyes of the servants, a common artless girl living in the palace was unacceptable.

Nonetheless, the two of them were favorites of the princess and on top of that he was being hailed as a hero and was captain of the Darkness God Corps. None of the castle knights dared to openly oppose him because of the [rings of divine arts] that he provided to members of every knight corps. Therefore, naturally there were people whom wanted to take revenge on him.

Most of the staff was employed from outside of the palace so they were not used to serving Sun as opposed to the palace servants. Their frankness could almost be considered harassment.

Artless people were more common nowadays, their figures could be seen performing cleaning duties around the middle class district. Although they could walk around nearly the entire city under the watch of their supervisors, it did not mean that the schisms of the caste system had been closed. That could also be said about the convictions that each person carried within their hearts.

As far as common divine arts users were concerned, the artless were not even within the caste system.

The palace officials that were responsible for personnel selection thought that Sun's presence in the palace was barely on a whim of their princess and that her status was nothing more than princess's pet. They had no idea about (could not comprehend) the mutual friendship that these two girls shared.

Thus, the palace officials that harbored dissatisfaction towards Yuusuke, selected personnel who did not know of the artless girl in the palace and had not briefed them of the situation before hand. They expected that these common divine art users would show the artless girl her place in this world.

The Servants' looks had held doubts, such as ["Why is an artless in such a place?"] Besides they were well aware of Sun's body becoming stiff.

Originally terrified by the power of the divine arts users, Sun's heart quickly shrank under the incomprehensible looks of the servants. The fact that Yuusuke might soon leave for Nossentes, leaving her to live in this house all alone, did not help to alleviate her anxiousness.

Oblivious to the plot behind all this, Yuusuke finally understood the perplexed looks of the gate guards and servants faces. It was still too early to think about any relations between the divine arts users and the artless.

"Uhm…. Head butler-san?" (Yuusuke)

"Please call me Zafys, master." (Zafease/Zafys)

"Mmm… Okay, Zafys." (Yuusuke)

"Yes master, what is your request?" (Zafys)

Besides giving orders to the head butler, Yuusuke also ordered to call the palace guards inside. When every person within the mansion grounds had gathered inside, Yuusuke had addressed them with an introductory speech. However, it was clear that he had to reconsider on what he should say during his speech.

"Sun is a precious …friend, which Zeshald has put in my care. She is like a family to me."

"I know some of you are prejudiced towards artless. I am not blaming you for that. However, this prejudice will not be tolerated in my house."

"Such negativity is not beneficial to either party. Those that do not recognize Sun as a member of this house, speak out now."

Said Yuusuke as he greeted the servants and the guards of his new house. Grabbing onto the hem of the Darkness God Corps uniform, and her shoulders faintly shivering, Sun was being lightly embraced by the captain of the corps. Servants and guards paled, seeing the anger of the hero of Gearhawk and Deernook. The silence of the grave fell upon the hall.

"Ah—So it's like that… Then I hope there will be no more discussions regarding this."

Seeing his servant's heads bowed down in shame, Yuusuke scratched his head, thinking he was a bit too harsh, and loosened his tone.

“Let me correct myself, I will be awaiting those that have something to say this afternoon here in the mansion. Everyone dismissed.”

Having finished his talk he felt like a manager or CEO introducing themselves to the new employees. Afterwards, Yuusuke invited Sun to take a trip around the mansion with him. The Head butler rushed to him in order to guide him around the house, but Yuusuke interrupted him. Waving his hand, and ordered to “ascertain the determination of the other servants.” As he left the room, he held eye contact with all of the servants that he passed on his way.

Head butler silently nodded his head, abiding by the master’s orders.

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“Still, this hidden room is splendid. Look here.” (Yuusuke)

Yuusuke inspected the mansion using his customization powers. There was no way that such a hidden passage and a hidden room, which were not present in the original plan of the house, would escape his notice. Yuusuke properly closed these “holes” with his customization power, while adding a little trap of his own.

“… Uhm, Yuusuke-san?”

“Mh? Have you calmed down a little bit?”

“Yes… Thank you.”

“Don’t worry. Good, now let’s go take a look at the second floor.”

Yuusuke and Sun held hands the entire time they were walking around the mansion.

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In the end, none of the servants left the mansion.

Chapter 45: Nossentes

The next morning, Yuusuke did a final check on his luggage which he had finished packing for the trip last night. A change of clothes, different types of fabric, which he uses as material for customization in preparations for wear and tear, and different types of food.

The mission to Nossentes will only officially begin after a briefing on the details in the palace.

Due to the small uproar yesterday, the servants of the house began to treat Sun with equal respect as Yuusuke. They also began to put their professionalism to work in serving the residents of the mansion. Yuusuke who noticed this, nodded as he said, ”Now I can leave for Nossentes with peace of mind.”

“Sun, I have something I would like you to do in my absence.”(Yuusuke)

“Yes? What is it?”(Sun)

Yuusuke entrusted Sun a “Ring of Wind Arts”, which he then told her to give to the vice-captain of the Wind Art Corps 4 days later. Although he could have asked Violet to do it, but knowing her temperament, some troublesome situations might occur.

In order to avoid an unnecessary uproar, Yuusuke decided to entrust it to Sun as she was already known within the palace.

“Well then, I’ll be back as soon as possible.”(Yuusuke)

“See you later, Yuusuke-san.”(Sun)

Sun gently released her hands from Yuusuke’s arm. It had already become a usual move for Sun to do this gesture as a sort of good luck charm whenever he went out, ‘Will Yuusuke have any reaction to it?’ As she was thinking about it, Yuusuke gently stroked her white hair.

Sun who was surprised by the moment was blinking intensively, as her cheeks became flushed in red, and she sent a fluffy smile to Yuusuke.

Yuusuke began descending from the foyer to the centre hall, his butler and 2 other servants stood in front of the door as they delivered their farewells to send off their master.

“Take care of Sun in my absence.”(Yuusuke)

“Affirmative* By your will. Understood.”(Butler)(TL notes: super respected way「畏まりまして御座います」)

Yuusuke boarded onto his personal carriage which was parked alongside the entrance, and gave his final instructions to his butler who then returned to the mansion.

“Now, here’s the overview of the mission.”

In the upper floors of Volance Palace, the Darkness God Corps were officially bestowed with a personal handwritten letter. That was to be delivered to Nossentes’s Capital, Patrucia Nost, with the ambassadors of Fonclanc. They will then stay there for several days before returning home.

Officially, the Darkness God Corps was to carry King Esvosbus’s personal letter, but in truth they were there to be the bodyguards of the ambassadors.

“Normally, a convoy consisting of different palace knights were to be organized and formed, these people would be carefully selected to form the group for a diplomatic mission, but….”

Currently, Nossentes and Gazzetta are in a cold war, and it is only at this period of time that they had to prioritize this and made a quick decision, as Krielov explained the situation regarding the overview of the mission. Before embarking on the main journey, they will go towards a small town south of Sanc Adiet, where they will spend the night.

On the first day of the journey (Day +1), they will head towards a port city in the vicinity of the Moon Mirror Lake which the journey should take an entire day, and after that they will reside there for a night. The following day (Day +2), they will be boarding a boat to cross the lake and land on the peninsula of Trent Rietta, and then they will be on foot from there to the middle of the peninsula, where they will set up camp.

On the third day (Day +3), they will continue to advance through the other half of the peninsula until they reach the south vicinity of the border, there they will join up with a convoy that is scheduled to be dispatched from Nossentes. On the last day (Day +4), they will board the coach which will bring them to their final destination, Patrucia Nost.

If everything went according to plan, they will enter the capital of Nossentes in the early afternoon of the 4th day.

“Note that, in the peninsula of Trent Rietta there might be attacks from magical beasts, so please take the necessary precautions.”(Krielov)

“I haven’t experienced any encounter with a magical beast before, is there any plans to deal with them?”(Yuusuke)

“They are just the basic dangerous wild animals which shouldn’t cause a huge problem.”(Vermeer)

These magical beasts appeared to have evolved from carnivorous animals which had eaten divine arts users. They inherit the divine arts ability from the victims, causing these creatures to mutate. As they evolve, they attune to the same type of divine arts as their victims had. After which, they have a tendency to target humans with the same type of divine arts as them.

If anyone amongst them is a target of an attack, they would have an easy time to judge and repel the attack without anyone getting injured.

Amongst the magical beast chain, there are those that evolve into carnivorous type and

the others which for some reason had adopted to become a herbivore, a plant type magical beast. Herbivorous beasts rarely attacks humans, thus they are normally left alone as they don't seem to be dangerous.

"The plant type magical beast are generally weak against fire, thus they hardly leave the forest. So when we are camping, as long as we keep the fire up around the forest outskirts we should be fine."(Vermeer)

"I see."(Yuusuke)

It seems that Vermeer and the others had experience with handling these magical beasts. Although, along the way, we have to pay attention to any kind of dangerous attacks that could be made by armed groups such as bandits.

"Now then, may the fortunes of war bless you on the success of the mission."(Krielov)

"Don't do anything unreasonable. Everyone must come back safely."(Violet)

Violet prayed for the safety of everyone as the Darkness God Corps began their journey from Sanc Adiet to the capital of Nossentes.

The darkness god corps and the ambassadors had arrived at their first destination, the small town in the south, around the evening. By using today's short trip they have conditioned themselves for tomorrow's long journey.

In order for the 3 ambassadors to handle the long trip, 2 to 3 plans were created before the final confirmation. After which, they headed back to the inn to rest their body in preparation for the next day's journey.

"Isotta"(Yuusuke)

"Ah, Captain…."(Isotta)

"Sending today's report?"(Yuusuke)

"Yes"(Isotta)

Isotta was currently concentrating on a spacious road while facing towards the direction of Sanc Adiet, using her transmission wind arts to report that nothing major had happened for the day. For those who are on a mission which requires constant moving, (e.g. scouting) regular contact through wind art transmissions played a crucial role.

"I, always….wanted to go on a mission like this, this is my first time."

"Me too."

"Ah...so, we're the same…"

The members of the Darkness God Corps knew that Yuusuke did not come from some artless village in some distant land that Zeshald declared when he brought him along to Fonclanc. They knew that Yuusuke was a being summoned from another world to become the evil god.

That said, "What is an evil god in the first place?", even the person himself doesn't have a clue.

"Captain…..is neither wicked nor evil."(Isotta)

"Awawawa, the evil god is most probably a kind of nickname/tag, I don't think that's a reason to become really evil you know?"(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke did not believe himself to be the "Evil God of Calamity" that is being rumored on the streets. By joining up the pieces of information he gained from the conversation he had with Shinha, he came to a conclusion that, 'There wasn't such a key to start the revolution as the evil god.'

"Well, I wonder if it would have been better to go to Shinha's place to see if there is truth in Shinha's statments."(Yuusuke)

"...Captain, erm….someday, you will eventually go to Gazzetta?"(Isotta)

"Eventually I will head there. Even if I go, I might not stay there you know?"(Yuusuke)

As Yuusuke stated that he wanted to find his purpose in this present world, Isotta began to turn away with an uneasy look on her face.

"But, Captain... would you become an ally of Gazzetta? You are irreplaceable to us….you know?"(Isotta)

"I will consider my options when the time comes."(Yuusuke)

"Please answer it seriously."(Isotta)

Hearing Yuusuke's answer without any hesitation, Isotta feared that it would become a hostile relationship in the future, thus she tried to question and hound Yuusuke for his true thoughts. Seeing how Isotta reacted to it, Yuusuke declared to her in a soothing voice.

"As long as I am myself, I would never become your enemies. So have peace of mind."(Yuusuke)

"....okay."(Isotta)

Isotta replied as she made a small nod.

The next morning, the Darkness God Corps whom had started the day early were proceeding smoothly on the highway that cut through the woods. They then arrived at a fork in the road in the vicinity of Blue garden's territory where they had their lunch break. The distance from here to the port city was roughly about a round trip from Sanc Adiet to Rufk.

"If we continue moving at this speed, we should arrive at the destination in the evening."(Vermeer)

"Understood, thanks for the hard work. Everyone take some rest before we start moving

again.”(Yuusuke)

“U~issu”(Fonke)

“Captain, the food is ready.”(Aisha?)

The horse drawn carriage was parked along the side of the road, the ambassador joined in with them and huddled in a circle as they began to stuff their face full with simple food. If one were to peek and look into the forest for just a bit, they could find natural growing rara fruits. With an abundance like that, it is unlikely that one could starve to death along the desolate lands of Kalticio.

“Will magical beasts appear in this location?”

“The carnivorous magical beasts around Fonclanc have been hunted almost into extinction, but if one were to enter deep in the forest there should still be remnants of plant type beasts.”

It is generally safe around the areas of the highway. Due to the sealing of the border the other time, in order to ensure the safety of the merchants who were traveling on the detour highway route, the subduing of magical beast around the highway was implemented. As a result these magical beasts had disappeared from the area.

In replacement of the beasts, bandits have started to infest the area.

“These armed groups are definitely more dangerous than the magical beast.”

“Ain’t that ironic.”

After the extermination of these magical beasts, it led to the current dangerous scenario. And in some sense, Fonclanc had learnt a valuable lesson, it’s not good to overdo things.

Since the ancient times, the artless have expressed an understanding, to preserve and balance the eco-system, but as eras changed to a more flexible attitude, those who know about these relationships might no longer exist.

After the break, they began to set off towards the port city. The sun began to set as they came out of the forest. On the right side of the horse-drawn carriage was the Moon Mirror Lake, they rode on for another 3 hours, and as they began to get closer to the port city, they could see its reflection shimmering on the surface of the lake from a distance.

Alighting in front of a large inn which overlooked the pier, people unloading their catch of the day could be seen. They each began splitting the workload of unloading their own luggage from the carriage. As they will be crossing the lake by boat tomorrow, even though it’s just a short pleasure walk from the inn, they still had to make sure that everyone is responsible for their own luggage.

“Tonight we will be spending the night here, tomorrow we will finally be entering the neighbouring country.”

Yuusuke muttered to himself as he looked at the reflection of Kaltcio’s moon on the dark surface of the lake, while standing beside Isotta who was making her daily report using transmission wind arts.

Chapter 46: Crossing Trent Rietta

“Good Morning, Captain. You’re up early.”(Aisha)

“Yosh~”(Yuusuke)

It was just before dawn when Aisha awoke to the darkness, Yuusuke was standing on the road in front of the inn while gazing at the lake. Near the pier, one could see the lights waving from the boats that went out to the lake to fish in the early morning.

“I was thinking about this yesterday, there seem to be only small boats around.”(Yuusuke)

“Yes, because the moon mirror lake is known as a sacred lake, they didn’t want to have too many huge ships moving around on the lake.”(Aisha)

“If it’s like that, I feel that it’s just superstition.”(Yuusuke)

According to the legends, if one were to put a big ship in the moon mirror lake, it is said that the boat will be dragged to the bottom by the master of the lake. Thus following the traditions, they had been rowing their boats even til today.

In the legends, “located at the bottom of the lake was an ancient sunken city. Within it lies an enormous sleeping treasure trove, and the master of the lake is said to be protecting the place, preventing any large ship from trying to approach the treasure.”

“Hmm, are there any people who have went diving to investigate it?”

“I think there was? But the sunken city is yet to be found, as you don’t normally hear stories about what is going on at the bottom of the lake.”

For better or worse, the old convention is still protecting this port city until today, as Aisha commented on the state of the city. If there were big ships, we would be able to cross the lake with the carriage, but that is only for one’s own convenience, so it can’t be judged whether it’s good or bad.

“Well, if one were to consider the opportunity of trading with the 4 countries, it’ll be better if one could use a bigger ship.”

The sun slowly rose along the horizon, as Yuusuke spends his time chatting with Aisha.

After breakfast, the Darkness God Corps and the ambassador party began to make their final preparations to board the boat. With almost no luggage, Yuusuke and his gang headed towards the pier to check on the boat which they were suppose to board.

“Ng~?”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke checked the state of the boat through the customization menu and began to groan suspiciously, he selected a certain portion of it and zoomed in.

“Captain, did something happened?”

Curious by why Yuusuke was clad in his divine skill aura while doing the usual ritual of his fingers wandering in the air, Vermeer called out to him. Every now and then, he could see Yuusuke's finger move to a certain location and seemingly push onto something, as it happens light effects would dance on the boat.

"For some reason, there is some gimmick-like function that will cause the boat to sink in the middle of the voyage."(Yuusuke)

"....gimmick?"

Vermeer's face turned pale and he started looking around the area. As Yuusuke customized the other boat, he saw a clay like material which seals a hole that is located at the bottom of the boat, it's description was that this clay will erode little by little as it is traveling along the water.

"That should do it."(Yuusuke)

"Were those things prepared for us?"

"This boat had been prepared for us, so most probably yes."

"What the, I wonder who it was that did that…."

While in a whispering tone, Yuusuke discussed the possibility that it could be the work of someone who might be obstructing the allying of Fonclanc and Nossentes. If one were to simply consider it, they would come to suspect Gazzetta, who is currently in a cold war with Nossentes, but ~~

"There is that suspicious armed group that we have been hearing about recently too."

Even now, there is still the floating suspicion of whether Nossentes was the string puller behind the armed attacks that had happened in Fonclanc. It also can be considered that in order to prepare Nossentes for the future against Fonclanc, they might want to bury the threat which is known for the most feats of valor awarded and the strongest combatant group of Fonclanc, the Darkness God Corps.

"Perhaps, within this country of Nossentes, there are collaborators from the armed group?"

"Thinking about it, it's highly possible, during the Blue Garden's incident, Shinha could get in and out of the country pretty easily."

The suspicion will never end if they start here, as there were too many possibilities, thus Yuusuke ended it with a shrug. Even Shinha's conjecture of that armed group being from Nossentes had in fact not been proven.

Also it is known that Gazzetta did not want to kill off Yuusuke from the Darkness God Corps. It was Shinha and Shinha's forces intention, although there are ones who goes against Shinha's indifferent policies and principles. Shinha claimed that there were no fanatical groups within Gazzeta that would pull off such stupid deeds such as forming armed groups, but there was no basis to assume that it was true.

There isn't enough information to determine this issue, Yuusuke concluded.

“We should at least report this to the HQ.”(Vermeer)

“True, inform Isotta to transmit it.”(Yuusuke)

As soon as the transmission about a sabotage happening during the mission was sent, the palace told them to carry on with the mission and immediately dispatched a soldier troupe to investigate the port city.

The boat carrying the Darkness God Corps was rowing towards the peninsula of Trent Rietta, with a figure looking into a telescope from a room in a budget hotel. According to that figure’s calculation, the hole in the boat should begin flooding with water in the middle of the trip between the port city and the peninsula.

“It seems that it’s impossible for me to check the result from here, I can’t see the boat from here, maybe it has already sank into the lake.”

“But, was it a wise idea? Didn’t the Divine parliament want to ensnare the Darkness God Corps’ Captain…?”

“Hmph….as if that’s possible, that out of date old man wanted to control such a monster. Well let’s just prepare a quick apology and it should be fine.”

“Wa,Har….”

「は、はぁ……」

While the squad was dispersed and lurking around the port city, the captain of the armed squad Volmes, who ignored his orders and acted arbitrarily without consultation, bewildered his subordinate as he walked towards the door.

“Where are you going leader?”

“Breakfast, there seem to be delicious fish dishes only available here in the port city.”

As he said that, Volmes, who is currently attached to the Nossentess special force as the captain of the special work group, left the room. It seems that the habit of his original “Fire troupe” subordinates calling him “leader” during the time when they were still in Blue Garden’s elite team had been brought along, as the subordinate panickedly followed behind him.

Of the two boats, the 3 ambassadors together with Yuusuke and Aisha were in one. While the rest of the members were taking the other boat to cross the lake. All of a sudden, Isotta felt a weird presence, she キョロ(((゜−゜*)(*゜−゜)))キョロ around the area, next she titled her head in confusion.

(TL note: Don’t ask me why but there is just an emoticon in the author’s work)

Nearby, on the surface of the water, the head of a huge fish appeared, but it seems that Isotta was looking out for something different as she shaked her head. “Was that my imagination?” she muttered to herself.

“Prepare to Disembark~”

Hearing Yuusuke shouting without any energy, the Darkness God Corps placed their luggage on their shoulder in preparation for landing. Thus, they have arrived in the peninsula of Trent Rietta just before lunch.

Since there wasn’t anything like a jetty or pier, the boats had to land directly onto the shore. It seemed like if one were to keep carrying their luggage, one would break their back, so in order to support his subordinates Yuusuke got off the boat empty handed and began to customize the ground near the water’s edge, making a temporary pier.

The boatmen’s eyes immediately opened up, making a bitter smile, as they rowed in towards the peninsula.

“Are we on schedule?”

“Yeah, up until now we are on schedule.”

After seeing off the boats which headed back to the port city, they began eating their lunch on the lake’s bank. After performing a wide-range scan of enemies, they set off towards the south. It seems that some magical beast presences were detected by the winds arts, and as it was a magical beast infected area, it wasn’t wise to use too much of a wide range search.

Even though it is said that they do not act in herds, there is the danger of attracting wandering magical monsters by using wide range search.

They headed south along the forest, they were around the middle of the peninsula as it began to turned dark, thus they decided to camp in that location.

“Wow, even after arriving here you aren’t really showing signs of fatigue, you are amazing captain…...captain? What’s wrong?”(Aisha)

“Nothing, it’s just that I have a bad feeling….”(Yuusuke)

From the landing site till here, everyone except Yuusuke were showing signs of fatigue on their face, with Aisha full of admiration towards Yuusuke. But, in actual fact it was due to the equipment which Yuusuke had that could recover his stamina. It’s not like he wasn’t tired.

As of now, the ability to enhance equipment is known to take time to create even one, thus Yuusuke won’t take the chances of creating it so easily in presence of the ambassadors. Yuusuke was reflecting on his lack of preparations, if only he had prepared some “Rings of strength/stamina.”

“Everyone take a good rest.”

Yuusuke began ordering the members to leave the campsite and start the preparations for the meal, next he opened his customization menu on the ground. As instructed by their captain, Aisha and Isotta stopped putting up the tent and went to prepare the food.

Vermeer and Shaheed headed and split up in the woods to forage for fruits, while Fonke who had been constantly using his movement assist wind arts, was lying flat in the pile of luggage.

As the Sun began to set, the 3 ambassadors wore a puzzled look, as the members of the Darkness God Corps have yet to set up a single tent.

"Ah, you guys….the preparations for the camp?"

"Should be fine, because captain said so."

"Erm, no, but it's….."

The nights will be chilly, there might be quite a lot of insects bites. And it might even rain. These ambassadors have yet to try camping before, to sleep outside with just a cloth on the ground felt too harsh, thus they had requested for a tent but ~~

"It's okay, look over there."

In order to appease the ambassadors, Aisha pointed towards the Captain who was doing his own thing in a remote location.

Yuusuke was customizing the ground into hardened block materials like stone bricks, it took around 30mins for the whole process including the assembling of the bricks into a robust hut. After he performed a final check in the customization screen, he implemented it.

"Execute."(Yuusuke)

"Look."(Aisha)

"What the!"(Ambassador, I don't know which one)

The hut was built with private rooms for everyone, with the appearance of such a building one could hardly call it a camp. The 3 Ambassadors marveled in surprize, as they just witnessed the rumored ultra high speed construction, the special god move of the Darkness God Captain.

Incidentally, since the ground was used as material, the surrounding area around the hut experienced a little depression. After securing their beds, the Darkness God Corps and the ambassadors, settled down with a simple dinner. Finally, they went to bed early to recover from their fatigue today, in preparation for tomorrow's trip.

During the night, after finishing his dinner, Yuusuke who was creating some stuff walked out his room and left the hut for a night breeze.

"Ah, Captain."(Aisha)

"Oh Aisha, thanks for your work today."(Yuusuke)

As it was Aisha job to recover the party member's stamina through the journey, a frequent and constant usage of water arts is required to accomplish this. Although, she

should have been as tired as Fonke who had been constantly using his wind arts for movement assist.

“I’ll get everyone to equip this tomorrow, it should greatly ease their fatigue.”(Yuusuke)

“What’s that?”(Aisha)

“Ring of Stamina, a stone version of this area.”(Yuusuke)

The looks of these rings were cheap, and the shape wasn’t as nice like the ones he had made before, “these were ones I had made before, but due to it being ugly I didn’t want to use it”, thus he will be using this as a reason why these rings weren’t being brought out earlier for use.

From here on, they will be heading into the forest towards the borders of Nossentes. This is expected to be the hardest part of the journey, unlike previous days. In case of an emergency, he wanted to hold back as much of the recovery and moving assist skills that were being used.

“Here, this is a ring type jewelry. This stone version buffs 3 times the effect.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke took out a translucent ring while he was talking, Aisha looked at the ring and Yuusuke alternately as she voiced out in confusion.

“Eh? Erm, eh…..?(Aisha)

“You seemed to be in tired the whole time right? I was watching you all the time trying to help the recovery of stamina, especially on the 3 ambassadors who don’t seem to have much physical strength.(Yuusuke)

“That is to say, it’s a special bonus from me to Aisha for her working so hard”, as Yuusuke placed the ring of recovery onto her hand. Aisha was grateful for her boss’ thoughtfulness.

“Than, Thank you very much, captain. I will…..cherish this preciously.”

She held the ring close to her chest while gripping it tightly as soon as it was bestowed to her. If one were to look from a 3rd person stance, it might look like a completely different situation, thus Yuusuke tried not to think so much about it.

“Waa Aisha has fallen~, Captain-don.”(Fonke)

「う〜わっ　エイシャ嬢陥落っすか〜、隊長どんだけー」

“Yea right, now hurry back to your room and get some sleep.”(Vermeer)

A pillow thrown by Vermeer came flying towards Fonke who was peeking out the window from the next room.

Chapter 47: At the Port Town

The next morning, Darkness God Corps and the ambassador's party had vacated their lodgings. Firstly they had advanced along the forest towards the southern end of the peninsula and then changed their direction southwards and entered the forest. They felt no fatigue due to the effect of Yuusuke's rings. Aisha seemed to benefit the most from the ring as she even increased her pace instead.

Using the routine wind arts transmissions they confirmed the locations of both the guard convoy sent by Nossentes, and their camp.

Not going too fast, nor too slow, keeping their pace so they would not overexert themselves, they moved through an animal trail at a surprising rate. They did not even stop to eat, instead replenishing themselves with simple supplies and rara fruits while continuing to move. They were able to arrive close to the nation's border by the evening.

"Are we heading in the right direction?" (Ambassador)

"Yes, do not worry. We should reach the border… in half an hour." (Yuusuke)

The sun that shone through the trees was starting to set. Everyone was breathing heavily, although that was to be expected, as they were going at such a pace since morning. Probably understanding that they will be able to rest safely and peacefully at the camp, the ambassador's party continued walking without voicing any complaints.

Rather, such a trip with camping and force marching through the forest was a completely new experience for the castle officials, who, up until now, were only responsible for managerial work. The current experience, which was completely different from their usual work became quite an uplifting experience once they had gotten used to it.

Travelling through the wild, unexplored territories, through unseen paths, going on a difficult mission, we must do our best! They were in such an adventurous mood, enjoying themselves to their fullest.

"?" (Isotta)

Around the time that they were about to reach the Nossentes camp, Isotta started glancing over her left shoulder. Noticing that, Yuusuke inquired her in a quiet voice.

"Did you notice something?" (Yuusuke)

"!? N..no… Maybe it was just my imagination." (Isotta)

Startled by the unexpected question, Isotta flailed her hands around as she answered the question.

"Is that so? Maybe it's the guys from that time! Maybe we have raised a flag." (Yuusuke)(T.N. Event flag as in a game. Maybe as in that they have cleared the conditions for Gazzetta to start their advance.)

"Pardon?" (Isotta)

Isotta replied with a quiet, questioning voice as she slightly bent her head. Remembering the trick with the boat, Yuusuke asked to be informed about the smallest things that she noticed.

"For now, tell me what you felt." (Yuusuke)

"…uhm, to tell the truth… It was quite far off, but I think I sensed the artless soldiers." (Isotta)

In a quiet, hesitant voice Isotta had voiced the feeling that she had already felt during the boat trip.

***

The forest that grew on the peninsula, protruding into the lake, was just like any ordinary forest, but it was part of a huge forest, that was called the [Sea of Trees], which covered most of Trent Rietta's territory. It was an enormous forest where any travelers would easily lose their way should they try to walk off the road, unless they had a skilled communication type wind arts user amongst them.

The [sea of trees] was like a fortress made by nature, that allowed such a small country to survive despite not being one of the major powers in Kaltcio.

Having just entered the edge of this vast forest, a group of White Sword Cavalry soldiers were hiding around half a day's distance from Nossentes' border.

Having received information about a goodwill ambassador of Fonclanc, they decided to take this chance to attack the capital of Nossentes, a city named Patrucia Nost, from the rear. They crossed Blue Garden's territory and swam through the lake from a nearby Fonclanc port town and have been hiding in the Trent Rietta's Sea of Trees for a few days.

"It seems that Fonclanc's ambassador's party has joined up with Nossentes' convoy." (Scout)

"Track and report their position to me. Take care to avoid detection." (Shinha)

Shinha gave these orders in response to the intel of the Darkness God Corps' party joining up with the Nossentes escorts and inquired about the gathering of his forces.

"According to the plan six soldiers are to arrive today. The remaining soldiers are also moving according to the plan." (Shinha)

"Two more days are needed until we can form the unit." (Scout)

"Two days, eh…? We might be cutting it close." (Shinha)

At first, Gazzetta (Shinha) thought that Fonclanc ambassador's party would take either Trent Rietta's main road to the east or go west through Blue Garden and use the Nossentes main road. However, they had to hastily gather into one place once they found out that the party was going to use the shortest route and cross the lake.

Patrucia Nost, for the larger part, used the huge castle, built by the royalty of the white tribe during their days of power, for the same purpose (T. N. of housing the rulers of the

nation). Being the descendant of the royalty of the white tribe, Shinha knew all the secrets of the castle as well as the location of the Divine Halls, where the Divine Parliament, the ruling body of Nossentes, resided.

However, the city was built with a defensive function in mind, so invading and gaining complete control of the castle was extremely difficult to carry out. The aim of Shinha's group was to attack the place that the ambassador's party was supposed to meet with the council and take control of the commanding body of Nossentes.

"And then, there seems to be a lot of sudden movements in Fonclanc's port town." (Scout)

"Hmm, port town… For now continue gathering the information." (Shinha)

Shinha decided to prioritize on gathering his raiding party over everything else, and decided to see what will come out of all the ruckus on the opposite shore.

***

At the same time in the port town—

"Enemy status?"(Volmes)

"Their forces increased again. Reinforcements seems to have just arrived and reinforced the siege at the east side." (Scout)

"Hmm… so they intend to block off our retreat path towards Trent Rietta?" (Volmes)

After receiving information from the Darkness God Corps, a group of soldiers were sent to the port town with all due haste and they were currently engaged with the enemy (T.N. Volmes' unit).

Their opponent were a special unit commanded by Volmes. When the sun had gone down, the group spread around the town and joined up at some place that was devoid of any unnecessary public attention. Since they had just arrived, some of them were already caught by enemy spies, belonging to the forces outside the town.

Quickly evaluating the attacking group's size, Volmes understood that the only way to break out was to focus their strength on a single point and push through there. Deciding on a course of action he immediately ordered the troops to prepare.

Quickly sensing the preparations, Fonclanc soldiers started storming the town. While the citizens were being evacuated, Volmes group started their struggle to weaken the encirclement and find some way to break through.

Cornered like that, Volmes group had finally been driven to the center of the town and had secluded themselves within a huge inn, which became their final standoff against the siege.

"Third and fourth groups, defend the barricades. First and second groups, line up at the second floor of the main room and tear down the frontal barricade."

Giving precise orders, Volmes ordered to open one path of the defended perimeter in an attempt to lure their enemies in, basing his strategy on avoiding the damage from all

directions.

Having given the order to defend that line to the last man, he brought his subordinates to the room that acted as his quarters and awaited the chance to escape.

The attackers took the bait and concentrated their forces around the bait thus thinning the siege, allowing Volmes for his chance for escape.

“Good, let’s go!” (Volmes) (T.N. all unmarked dialogue in this paragraph will be between Volmes and his subbordinates)

Volmes and his two subordinates entered the secret passage to the nearby house and escaped the area, glancing back at the assaulted inn.

“We will hide in the forest north of the town. Don’t fall behind me.”

“Eh? Captain, what about the other soldiers?”

His subordinates inquired about the detached force that was arriving as their backup. Volmes, showing [“What are you saying?”] look on his face, glanced at his subordinates and explained his escape tactics.

“I would not say that they are abandoned. At the very least they can still escape. After we hide in the forest, they will be able to withdraw towards Trentorietta.”

“But, isn’t this the same as abandoning them?!”

“Gazzetta collaborators (T.N. probably referring to the attacks in Fonclanc), Nossentes soldiers, aren’t these the guys that walked with us through all of that?!”

“Silence! This time the enemy read us like a book!”

From their point of view, leaving the men from the same elite group without any clear plan was nothing short of betrayal. These two men originally belonged to the fire troupe, the elite group of the Blue Garden. Order to leave their fellows to die like that was unacceptable for them.

“I am sorry captain.”

“We cannot follow you anymore.”

“Is that so, well then, goodbye.”

Saying that in an indifferent voice, Volmes turned his back on his subordinates.

“You two were serving me well up until today.”

“Captain…”

Volmes looked at them over his shoulder. With a flash, a flame scythe slashed the air and the head of one of the two people rolled down, the thankful expressions from receiving praise from his captain was still on his face. Second subordinate was still in shock as Volmes stabbed him with a sword, clad from flames.

“Ca… Cap…tain…”

“It’s a waste, I thought you two would still be useful for me for a while longer. Sadly you have just become troublesome for me.”

Volmes increased the strength of the flames and, after waiting some time to burn the insides of his prey, drew the sword out from the now lifeless body. Laying a final glance on the corpse Volmes resumed walking, aiming for the town’s gate.

“?!”

Volmes passed an alleyway and walked towards a wide crossroad. (T.N. several wide crossroads in original, but that does not sound well in English imo). Suddenly a flame bullet was shot at him from his flank, which he easily blocked with his sword of flames. The next moment soldiers spilled from the alley, encircling him and readying their weapons for combat.

A person, clad in the bright red palace corps uniform, stood amongst soldiers.

“Using your troops as a decoy to save yourself, despicable.” (Hivodir)

“You, from that time… You actually belong to the Fire God Corps, I am surprised.” (Volmes)

Hivodir, who volunteered to lead this investigation, stood before Volmes and his path to freedom.

He found it suspicious, that after some time the movements of the defenders within the inn became dull so he assembled a squad and scoured the entire town with it. Following his usual style he withheld the feelings of revenge against the group that was destroying the artless villages within Fonclanc.

“It’s over for you, surrender.” (Hivodir)

Hivodir’s group remained on guard against Hivodir as he seemed to completely surrender, throwing his sword away, saying “It can’t be helped.”

“What?” (Hivodir)

“I am saying that I will be your prisoner of war. I know important information regarding the attacks on the artless villages.” (Volmes)

Although he surrendered nearly instantly, inside his mind Volmes was planning ahead on what he should do to survive.

He bet on a chances that, based on the policies and character of king Esvobus, cruel treatment of surrendered prisoners should be prohibited. If he was right, then he should be soon transported to Sanc Adiet.

Once he, a spy and a sympathizer of Nossentes will be captured by Fonclanc, an official statement will be expected from Patrucia Nost.

If they remain silent, he would reveal the plan “to entice the captain of the Darkness God Corps to defect” and attempt to switch sides again. For this reason he had arranged the boat that ferried the Darkness God Corps to return safely after they corps crossed the lake.

[“Those bastard Nossentians think too highly of themselves.”] (Volmes)

It should be enough if I feed them some information that I obtained directly from the divine parliament. If I play it right, that should suffice for these conceited bastards. Volmes planned to play around both, Nossentes and Fonclanc and escape them both.

With that, the group that was attacking the villages in Fonclanc was finally subjugated in the town by the Moon Mirror lake.

The fight at the inn continued until late night. When the battle was over, excluding those that surrendered, almost all of the Volmes’ former soldiers had perished in action.

Chapter 48: Patrucia Nost

Having spent the night at the Nossentes escort camp, Yuusuke's group rose early in the morning, boarded a separate escort group's carriage and started the final leg of their journey towards the ancient capital, named Patrucia Nost.

They exchanged a quick greeting with the escort party when they arrived late last night and then proceeded straight to the preparations for tomorrow's journey, followed by rest. Without sufficient space to build the house like last time (pls confirm), Yuusuke did not bother customizing the earth and they accepted the tents that the escort party had provided them with.

Ambassador's party, which expected to be able to rest in a lodging house again suddenly seemed somewhat dispirited and much more tired. However, Yuusuke was able to provide his corps, ambassador's group, and even the escort party with a pleasant sleep.

"Captain, rather than being on a battlefield, this seems like a high class suite." (Ambassador)

"Well, yeah. Even I can't think of us being in battle right now." (Yuusuke)

The quality of the customization was so high, that the ambassador's party was able to get a pleasant rest in these comfortable sleeping bags, which had become a trademark of the Darkness God Corps. Even the escort party seemed to be more refreshed than what one would expect from the soldiers on the field.

Soldiers had to rest no matter the harshness of the situation. So the Darkness Corps sleeping bags were the best kind of marching supplies that these soldiers could hope for.

"Where in the world did they get these from?" (Nossentes soldier)

Darkness God Corps-Ambassador's party were receiving such praises from the escort party as they left the forest and entered the highway, and, come afternoon, they had arrived at their destination.

***

Compared to the pyramid-like Sanc Adiet, which expanded upwards, Patrucia Nost looked like it was meant to be a huge fortress from the beginning. It was a gigantic castle, build exclusively for the royalty of the white tribe and their retainers. (T.N. Yet it also apparently looked like a mountain)

Structurally, the houses merged together and looked like a single huge building. However, the divine art user's caste segregation still existed here – the city was divided into five almost evenly sized districts. Because of that the lower class people usually spent their entire lives indoors.

An open plaza spanned over nearly the entirety of the top floor, and the shops and residential quarters were located inside the building(s).

Yuusuke's party was passing through the palace district where the tallest and most

beautiful buildings lined up along the road. The delivery of the letter and the audience with the ambassador's party was planned for tomorrow, so, after a quick discussion with the ambassador it was decided that Darkness God Corps would split up with the ambassador's party for today.

The Darkness God Corps also split amongst themselves, there were those that went to rest in the rooms prepared for them, and those that went to walk around the city. Yuusuke of course joined the latter as his original goal of traveling to this city was to procure the necessary medicine.

Vermeer and Shaheed received permission to walk around the city, to inspect its architecture. Meanwhile, Aisha and Isotta joined up with Yuusuke as they wanted to buy cosmetics and some souvenirs for their parents.

Strangely, Fonke, who seemed to want to go out and play in the beginning, stayed in their lodgings to rest. In truth, he probably wanted to rest until the evening and spend the night in the city.

***

"Mhh, it would be nice if anyone told me of a good place…" (Yuusuke)

While searching for the medicine shop, Yuusuke entered an indoor passage that looked to be an underground shopping district. It did not seem likely for him that he would find what he was looking for if he only wandered around aimlessly and he was slightly regretting that he went out without doing any prior research on the matter. Hence, Yuusuke only sighed, looking at the bustling street, full of people going about their business. As he was restlessly looking around while standing alongside the wall (of some building)—

"Excuse me, is there anything wrong?" a young woman called out to him. Actually, more of the passerby's than just this one girl, had noticed him looking around like he had lost himself in the city, however his appearance and strange, unfamiliar divine arts aura had prevented them from approaching him.

The arrival of the Fonclanc's friendship ambassador was well known even between the common people.

Between the whispers about the defeat of their long time enemy, Gazzetta, in the lands of Blue Garden by the armies of Fonclanc, there were some rumors about a hero, who was the leader of the Darkness God Corps. In order to be hailed as a hero, one had to kill a great deal of enemies during the battle.

However, it was not very well known that the same corps were also renowned for the events of the Gearhawk and Deernook fortresses.

Therefore people were staring at the man in black, who was leaning against the wall, thinking that he might actually be that hero, and were afraid to call out to him.

Incidentally, the young woman that called out to Yuusuke was either brave, softhearted, or she was simply an airhead. She looked to be around twenty years old, perhaps even slightly younger than that and had a ladylike atmosphere around her. With her yellow hair tied to her side, and lively, yet quite gentle appearance, she looked to be quite a lovely girl.

“Pheeew, I could really use some help! Would you mind if I asked for some directions around the city?” (Yuusuke)

“Not at all, it would be my pleasure.” (Yellow haired girl)

Having received the directions to the pharmacy, Yuusuke thanked the girl, who walked away after smiling gently to him. Yuusuke, having bought a number of the medicine vials, hurriedly returned to his room in the palace district and performed some quick customizations.

The red bottle, full of healing liquid, was an expensive medicine and cost nearly three red shoukas. Hearing the amount that Yuusuke asked for, shopkeepers could not believe his ears. By the way, if one bought the medicine in some other country, considering transportation expenditure, its price would become even higher. (Might delete last sentence as it was already said in the last chapter..)

“I guess, I will start by trying to leave the healing rate the same while adding a divine arts amplification and a physical strength recovery.” (Yuusuke)

Trying to customize stronger recovery effects into the medicine, Yuusuke felt that he could make the medicine fit a range of possible uses if he tampered with the various healing effects.

***

When Aisha called for Fonke the next morning, the guy seemed to be dead tired after having just returned to his quarters after spending the entire night in the city. At the same time, Yuusuke was about to test the customized medicine to see if it’s effect mirrored those of the water arts.

According to Yuusuke’s customization menu, the medicine was at the level that was simply impossible to create from mere water, thus he was convinced that the medicine will be pretty useful.

“Hey, I don’t want to be the experimental rat.” (Fonke)

“Well, I know that it will not be dangerous. I just want to see whether it will be effective or not.” (Yuusuke)

While trying to persuade Fonke that there is nothing to fear, Yuusuke somehow managed to get the guy to take the stamina restoration potion into his hand.

“I always was a loyal subordinate.” Fonke said in a pleading voice.

“I know. That’s why I am expecting you to drink this.” (Yuusuke)

“… Th- these people…” (Aisha)

As opposed to Fonke, Aisha was feeling down since morning and would have been a perfect candidate to test the mood lifting medicine. (kanji read [tranquilizer])

***

If they were to hand over the personal letter during today's audience, the first stage of the mission of the Darkness God Corps would be over and they could leave the rest to the ambassador's party. Between some small meetings the members of the corps planned to spend their time sightseeing around the city and leisurely await for the day they were supposed to return to their own country.

At the time that Fonclanc's ambassador's party had a meeting with the representatives of Nossentes divine parliament, the other members were monitored in their quarters or during their time in the city to prevent any intelligence leaks or misconduct. At the same time as the meeting, the divine parliament was gathered in the divine halls to discuss the means to entice Yuusuke to join their side, the movements of Gazzetta, and the current situation in Fonclanc.

"It seems that Volmes' unit was destroyed."

"I knew we shouldn't have trusted an outsider with this task."

"Our biggest problem is that guy is Fonclanc's prisoner now."

"We can get the aristocrats at their side (that are loyal to our cause) to take care of him, now let's discuss the matter of the Darkness God Corps and the Evil God."

Yuusuke and the rest had not yet received the news regarding the incident at the port town. Even the ambassador's party was just informed about these recent events. The information has been delayed for the sake of hiding the espionage power of Nossentes and make the actual number of spies seem not as great as it actually was.

The city had a protection from transmission type wind arts so one had to get permission to send or receive a transmission. Even Isotta had ceased using her wind arts and their safe arrival to Nossentes was reported to their home country by the capital wind arts users. Isotta was feeling uneasy about that, but since they were guests of another country, to disobey the rules would mean raising doubts about them, thus they had no choice but to comply.

When she reported it to captain Yuusuke, he only muttered "Yeah, it would be the best to contact them by ourselves, but this would certainly be for the best." Isotta only replied with "Yes it would." Dealing with Nossentes only brought feelings of uneasiness for them.

Nonetheless, these were the rules of the country they were staying in, so Yuusuke did not worry much about it and was about to go out into the town today to, again, look for medicine.

***

"Oh, if it isn't Yuusuke-sama!"

"Ah, he's an acquaintance of your's sister?"

"Hm?"

Yuusuke heard this exchange as he was walking towards the medicine shop and turned his head towards the voices. He saw two people there, one girl seemed to look familiar to her, while he had seen the other in the town before. One of them was a beautiful

young girl with light blue hair and eyes, the other – a girl that had given him the directions around the city yesterday, who had yellow hair that was tied up to her side.

"Rashanasha-san, and the girl from…?" (Yuusuke)

"Ah… hello"

"Oh! It really is Yuusuke-san!"

["That's right, we're leaving back for Fonclanc soon"], thought Yuusuke, meeting unexpected people in unexpected places and was reminded of something Rashanasha told him earlier.

"Thinking about that—are you her younger sister?" (Yuusuke)

"Eeh, the younger sister that you were talking about earlier?" (Yellow haired girl) (T. N. Apparently Yuusuke had told her of Rashanasha.)

"Ah, hello, my name is Razsha."

"Thank you for yesterday. I'm Yuusuke."

Razsha quickly lowered her head and Yuusuke responded with a prompt Japanese greeting. Rasha's vigor reminded Yuusuke of Violet, gentle demeanor – of Sun, the way she panicked – of Isotta, and the clear way of talking – of Aisha.

***

Figures, watching Yuusuke and the girls from the shadows, reported in to their superiors through a secret/hidden/covert wind arts transmission.

["–Honeybee contact confirmed.–"]

["–Roger. Continue tracing the target.—"]

Chapter 49: Omen

In the previous world where Yuusuke had come from, there was a game that he had always played. He wasn't enough of a heavy user to be called a "Game otaku", but could not even be called a light user since the genre he played was unusual.

It was a standard galge, which could also be referred to as a love based novel, and it was kind of like a moe base game specified for the players. Therefore, players of these games would often refer humans and things to their game-like representation.

"How do I put it….is this something like a flag rush from a limited time only character?"(Yuusuke)

The Darkness God Corps is staying in Nossentes for the next 3 days and Yuusuke had somehow caused an event called Razsha whenever he went out into the city.

For some reason, wherever he goes, he seemed to run into a "coincidental" event, either colliding at some passageway or around the corner of a street. Moreover, she would take wide strides and would always fall on her backside, while crying out in a cute voice "Aitata". Next, She would then panic and try to hide her skirt while looking up with watery eyes and say, "Did, did you see it?"

"Yuusuke-san, somehow you are a naturally great person…..being with you makes one feel relaxed."(Razsha)

"Hahaha……"(Yuusuke)

While Yuusuke and Razsha began walking down the passageway while conversing. A handkerchief falls out softly from Razsha's pocket. Without a second thought, Yuusuke immediately tries to retrieve it and his hand collided with Razzasshia's.

"....ah."

With their hands overlapping. Razsha immediately retracted her hands as she held them tightly between her chest. It seems like she had recently been doing such things.

Fonke was relaxing at the salon which was dedicated for the guests of the royal district, when he saw Yuusuke coming back from the city and called out to him.

"Captain, are you flirting around with that girl again?"(Fonke)

"Fonke….I am not really flirting around with her."(Yuusuke)

Scratching his head, Yuusuke sat on the sofa opposite of Fonke as he wanted his opinion. A waiter/waitress who was standing alongside the wall immediately came by to prepare tea for Yuusuke.

"What are you saying, whenever Captain is around, Shia-chan becomes super cute~"

"Cute, is it!?"(Yuusuke)

Speaking out in a envious tone, Fonke crossed his arms and tilted his head while growling “Uh-huh” at Yuusuke. However, Yuusuke did not seem to be embarrassed about it, and was giving off a joking ambience. Seeing that, Fonke began to seriously worry about him and questioned whether he had any feelings.

“Captain, don’t tell me that you really aren’t interested in girls? Don’t tell me you are interested in the opposite….”(Fonke)

“Nonono, It’s not like that... it’s just that.”(Yuusuke)

It is true that Razsha’s gestures and facial expression are adorable, but for some reason Yuusuke felt that her behaviour was unnatural. He presented his views to Fonke’s grand question.

“Waa? Really, where? No, even if she’s acting, there is no way that such cuteness could be an act, it’s impossibru~”

「はあっ？　何処がっすかっ？　いや、アレが例え演技だとしても、アレだけ可愛く見せようするっていう事はっすねーー」

“Chill man, calm down a second.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke first tried to calm down and soothe Fonke. Seeing Fonke’s reaction to, “Such a cute girl,” that generally showed her favourable qualities which appealed to most normal men, giving the impression that one could approach her without any doubts, and wanting to protect her, believing that she could do no wrong.

“Well, in terms of women, that girl is cute enough for her to put on airs, and to make everyone else jealous.”(Fonke)

“Hmm, so that’s what the people here would feel like.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke refers “the people here” to the general populace of Kaltico, while Fonke took it as a reference for “Nossentes people”. “Cuteness is Universal!”, was the phrase, is it the same even in a different world? Or is it just this.

“By following the flow of the topic, I believe that she is acting in order to win my favor…”(Yuusuke)

“Without thinking about that, those reactions are easily to grasp.”(Fonke)

“Nope~For me I would let nature take its course, or rather I would like someone who would want me instead.”(Yuusuke)

“ARGHHH Dammed it Captain! What’s with that high and mighty demand! She is a real beauty, and you want someone ”to want you”!? WTF!”(Fonke)

In Fonke’s scream, ‘lovable, is it?’, Yuusuke thought about the situation regarding Razasha as he turned to mess with an agitated Fonke. But if there is a cause for the favor, it would most probably be about Rasanasha.But ~

‘Even so, that is abit….’

Her acting is really complete. For example, high school girls who are welcoming some foreigners that are coming to japan for the first time will pretend to be cute(ぶりっ子) in order to get them to say 'OH! CUTE', with the attention, and compliments from them that follow. Any average man would definitely be captivated by them.

(TL notes: ぶりっ子 Burikko, acting cute/pretend to be cute AKA fakes)

However, like telemarketers and door to door salesman, these kind of girls would change their attitude and tone to whom they speak, thus this kind of act would not work on Yuusuke as he had the knowledge and experience on how to handle it.

In fact, Razzashia's pushy acting was way too forceful, so for Yuusuke, who has the sense of the modern age, this type of acting was easily seen through immediately. If one would observe calmly, they would see Razsha herself still hasn't noticed that her acting was exposed.

Nevertheless, going out of one's way to point out and flatly refusing someone's good gesture is dreadful. And in that state, Yuusuke who is half biased due to his experiences and knowledge was thinking about how should he handle this situation, and was having mixed feelings about it.

While Yuusuke was feeling complicated in the royal district, within a room in a house located in the middle class districts where the 2 sisters live, Rasanasha and Razsha were discussing about the tasks arrangement that were assigned to them as the intelligence operatives of Nossentes.

"Let's see, tomorrow we will finally enter the last phase."

"Isn't it a little too rushed?"

"It's fine, times like this are important as one should make use of the momentum. And must not allow the opponent free time to consider about it."

According to Razzashia's analysis on the Darkness God Corp's Captain Yuusuke, "that person tends to always be in a hurry to be in front". Generally speaking, one should make use of the momentum, these opportunities do not come often, it's the kind of thing that one would like to finish in one shot.

By looking at Yuusuke's attitude towards the bait that was laid out by them, they decided "to take advantage of the opportunity" through their experiences up until now, as any kind of man will follow their impulse when being held down in similar scenarios.

"After reading the report from Fonclanc, doesn't it seem too flattering?"

"It's said to be so in the rumors, but…."

Although on the surface the person might seem calm, on the inside they are using their own reasoning to suppress most of their current mental state, all in order to put up with appearances and needless to say they would always wear a stiff expression, even if their expression becomes scary, it would not be unusual.

At first glance, one might show a look of disappointment on the surface, but on the

inside they are desperately trying to hide the fact of being very happy, that said, these kinds of things do happen often.

"The Darkness God Corps will leave two days after tomorrow, if one would take his impatience into consideration, tomorrow will be the best timing to attack."

She had came to place whereby lust generally prevails endurance. While he came as the companion of the goodwill ambassadors, there are public gazes around, but with her elder sister's Rasanasha helping nearby with the act, she had no choice but to become a wolf.

Though Razsha judged that she must be endlessly worrying about nothing. These types of herbivore gentleman would wait until the last minute, where they would suddenly change as all their suppressed impulses erupts. Up until now all the guys she had seen through work were such creatures.

When she begins her assault of seducing Yuusuke, Rasanasha will join in to help, thus she believed that this would be sufficient enough to gradually enter his embrace.

"A pleasure stimulant (Aphrodisiac) is available for usage. You have no problem in using them right?"

"Yes, I had experienced it once."

The medicine will increase a person's sensitivity which will cause an increase in burden on the body especially if one was afflicted by disease. Therefore, it would not be unbelievable for someone to die during sex.

"Well, that would be good. If I were to use it, I myself will feel as though I'm flying, this time the objective is to become very close to the target so it shouldn't be any problem."

There was only one problem now, that is what was the reason about the guise of being an innocent young woman up til now.

Normally, Razsha would change her image depending on the target and she would think of countermeasures using the prior information that was provided with about the target, but this time she couldn't do so. Jammed by the lack of information, it's useless to go to great lengths and erect a plan which could be easily broken.

~~ Once upon a time, elder sister had made a noble man fall in love with her who later on raped her, that person was really scary. Because of that, I dislike elder sister's work. But, Yuusuke-san isn't scary, I'm sorry for not having a pure body, but…..I , if it's Yuusuke-san ~~

"Yosh, let's go with this scenario."

Razsha began playing out scenario inside her head, as she muttered and did an action of hitting a ball. Rasanasha who was standing next to her titled her head while secretly expressing in a heart, "what will I do if you could make gestures so much cuter than me", as they tied down the final settings.

"You will come in and stumble onto me and Yuusuke who were getting started, next as a elder sister being jealous of the little sister you will intrude us and let's exhaust every

mean of escape.”

“Okay.”「わかりました」

Rasanasha will assume the role of inviting him to tomorrow’s dinner, as she was the senior in this kind of work, Razsha agreed to the strategy, although in her heart she was in doubt due to her perception of Yuusuke.

‘I wonder if Yuusuke-sama will fall for this trick…?’

Still the rumors and the Earl’s personality is strange for Rasanasha to understand.

The next day ~~

Yuusuke had received a dinner invitation from Rasanasha and her sister, since it was just before noon, he went to check on the condition of the customized drugs that he had bought. In the afternoon, as he was walking out of his room to head towards the two sisters’ house, he was hailed by Vermeer showing a difficult face.

“Captian, could I take a little of your time?”(Vermeer)

“Ng?”(Yuusuke)

He was guided by Vermeer to a corner of the salon where all the members of the Darkness God Corps were gathered at, after which Fonke deployed a wind arts membrane which prevents eavesdropping.

“So what’s troubling you?”(Yuusuke)

“Eh, how do I put it….Isotta has felt signs of presences again.”(Vermeer)

“Signs of presences…..the Artless warriors is it?”(Yuusuke)

“Ye,Yes….from the camping grounds, all the way till the city, I have always felt their presence….”(Isotta)

There was the wind wall which blocks transmission around the city, it even limits the range of the search ability to the boundaries of the city, not only that, one could only feel the presence of someone if they were close. Though there is an exception only when there was a transmission being carried out by Nossentes, one could use it to listen to the winds from the outside.~~

“So the Artless warriors are within the vicinity…?”(Yuusuke)

“Most likely….I had truly felt them by accident….from here I shouldn't have been able to sense them within the vicinity though.”(Isotta)

Like the time at Deernook Fortress, where the Gazzetta’s army was lurking in the vicinity of the area, Isotta who voiced out anxiously. After the long term conflict of Gazzetta and Nossentes it was followed by a cold war, thus it wasn’t weird if Gazzetta’s army was in the vicinity of Gazzetta.

If one were to see the battle between these two countries, if it were to take place in the

plains, Nossentes's forces would have an advantage as they capitalized on powerful long range Divine arts, while if they were to enter the forest and mountains, Gazzetta's army, which specializes in guerrilla tactics will prevail.

As a result, the area around Patrucia Nost which is near the borders of Gazzetta and Nossentes is unsettling. The forest which was west of the immediate vicinity of the city was controlled by Gazzetta, this forest set the stage for small skirmishes between both countries.

In order to cover the rear of the city where Trent Rietta's Sea of Trees is, Nossentes spread it's troops to the North and South of Patrucia Nost, a type of fortress city tactic to prevent Gazzetta's army from flanking them.

"By the way, which direction was the presences at?"

"East….the direction facing Trent Rietta."(Isotta)

"Something like the scouting units from Gazzetta?"

"Ng, if I remember correctly….before entering Nossentes's camping grounds, there were signs of their presence over there right?"(Yuusuke)

Isotta nodded as an answer to Yuusuke's question. During the crossing of the lake, she thought that it was just her imagination as she felt the thin presence, if one were to think about it, it was a pretty unnatural location for a mere scout troop from Gazzetta to be.

'"Did they follow us all the way here?"

"For what reason?"

No disruption was caused to interfere with the friendship between Fonclanc and Nossentes.

"Other than the boat sabotage, there weren't any other disturbances….even so it's too subtle for it to be connected to Gazzetta."

"So, this accidental feeling was felt when you took the alternate route through the back of the city, is it not because you didn't like walking on the same road as me?"

The reason why she was using the rear routes of Patrucia Nost was to cope with an all round attack if it occurred in the fortress city. Shaheed believed that even if they attack at the same time from both the east and the west, there would not be much effect.

"Ng, I understand, so everyone was being vigilant just in case."

"This kind of thing to Nossentes is….?"(Isotta)

Yuusuke looked towards Isotta as she questioned Vermeer, who began to think about it for a moment. As soon as Isotta became fidgety due to being stared at, Vermeer came to a conclusion.

"There isn't a need to report this, there doesn't seem to be any suspicious movement from Gazzetta so we should just keep a look out."

“Could I listen to the reason for this?”

“For now, it seems like only Isotta was able to sense the Artless, one should not reveal what they have in their hand.”

The Darkness God Corps is currently in the city which blocks wind transmission, so if the news of Gazzetta’s army is closeby was brought up, it might bring up unnecessary suspicions from Nossentes. So by doing so, there wasn’t a need to bring up Isotta’s ability.

Yuusuke determined that this kind of reckless reveal of ability wasn’t ideal, if one were to consider about the future of a way to counter Gazzetta. Vermeer and Shaheed supported his decision, while Fonke and Aisha nodded silently in agreement.

“In conclusion, no one other than us is allowed to know about Isotta’s ability.”

“Ah, yes, we understand.”

Yuusuke who unconsciously stroked Isotta on the head to calm her down had instead made her show a awkward expression again. After ending the long conversation, Yuusuke stood up and decided to head towards the 2 sisters’ house.

Hearing Yuusuke was invited to the 2 beautiful sisters’ house, Fonke waves farewell to him. Monologuing.

“Captain, take it slow~”(Fonke)

“I’ll return as soon as possible.”(Yuusuke)

“Just~take~your time~”(Fonke)

“....I’ll be back soon.”(Yuusuke)

Immediately after the serious talk, Yuusuke seem to cheerfully stand up on his feets to head towards the beautiful sisters house, feeling worried about how the girls would see him, Yuusuke hurriedly left.

“Haiz….omg, captain and Fonke aren’t serious….. Hey, you better buck up too.”(Aisha)

“Wa uuu…..”(groaning?)

Aisha is the only person with common sense who acts as the conscience of the Darkness God Corps. She hugged Isotta who was currently drunk on her emotions while sighing.

Chapter 50: Deceiving sisters

"Captain goes to dinner with the beautiful sisters, the Ambassadors go to a dinner for the nobles~"(Fonke)

"Wawa, it isn't that bad to eat together."(Aisha)

"Isotta is also drinking sake."

After sending Yuusuke off, the remaining members of the Darkness God Corps were idling in the salon, as it was about dinner time, they started seating themselves around the table.

Since the first day, they had been doing their own things by themselves, but as of now, it seems that being together as a unit made everyone feel more secure. Maybe it was due to the recent discussion which had more or less affected everyone.

"Thinking about it, well….even if Gazzetta attacks, this fortress like city wouldn't fall so easily."

"That's true", as the members nodded in assent to Shaheed's words.

On the other hand, Yuusuke who had been invited to the house of Razshia and Rasanasha was enjoying the pleasant times.

"So how's the taste?"

"Hmm, it's pretty tasty."

"Fufufu that's great."

Although he was recommended to drink sake, as he could not drink much, he gently refused. Unintentionally, Yuusuke dodged a stimulant mixed drink. Razshia was keeping up with her anti-darkness god corps, pitiful young girl mode, while hatching a plan to somehow drug him.

Razshia had concocted her own special stimulant, one which was odorless and tasteless but could also invoke a powerful lust similar to hallucinogens. Though it had a short shelf life, if it is mixed into the food and drinks and not consumed within 10 secs, the effect would disappear, thus it was a hard to use medicine.

So by recommending the food and drinks, she would mix it in prior to serving. Therefore, pouring it along with the sake was one of the easiest tricks, it should have been "Yes, ok" that kind of situation, but the sake was rejected early.

'I hope we won't miss the target….but, as one would expect that a sudden "ah~n" and doing it would be unnatural.'

The lineup for the food was made in a way to become more spicy, so one would become thirsty for water. Razshia filled some small cups with water halfway, anticipating that not before long he will ask for more water, and at that time she would mix the

stimulant in. The chance would soon arrive.

“Sorry, could you give me some water.”

“Ah, yes”

“Ahh Onee-chan, please sit, I’ll do it instead.”

With agility Razshia move towards Yuusuke with the water jug, she opened up a small capsule which was on the tip of her finger, as she was pouring the water she drips a drop of the special stimulant into the cup. “Here you go” as she offered the water, “Thank you”, as Yuusuke began drinking.

‘Great, next step is our preparations.’

Razshia use her eyes to slip a signal. Having received it, Rasanasha stood up from her seat while saying, “I’ll go get the dessert.” After confirming that Rasanasha was out of the room, Razshia snuggled besides Yuusuke while whispering into his ears.

“Hmm Yuusuke-san….how far have you progressed with onee-chan?”

“Eh? Your sister and I aren’t in that kind of relationship you know?”

“Ehhh~~is that true~~?”

“No, it’s true, it’s true.”

And then a series of questions and answers began as promised, hearing Yuusuke’s answer Razshia with a satisfied face, giggling and chuckling while getting even closer to him while whispering. A faint sweet, cookie-like aroma coming from her tickled Yuusuke’s nose as his body temperature began to rise.

“Well then, Yuusuke’s-san…..person of interest~~”

At that moment, Rasanasha returned with a dish piled up with desserts.

“Sorry for the wait….did something happen?”

“Nope nothing.”

“Nothing at all onee-chan.”

In a panic, Razshia jumped back into her seat for ‘show’, tilting her head as a part of the ‘show’. Rasanasha placed the desserts on the table. Up until now the arrangements have been proceeding as planned.

Seeing that Yuusuke had no change in his appearance, and wondering whether the special stimulant had worked, Razshia had whispered sweet temptations to see if he would react. Wondering whether he would be moved by her not so appropriate appearance.

In the first place, everything should have already taken place. Since it has come to this point, there was no point in staying passive, so Rasanasha secretly turned on her fighting spirit and started the next stage of the plan.

“Wait, Shia? Isn’t that Sake?”(Rasanasha)

“Ara? …..have I made a mistake?”(Razsha)

Razshia who thoughtlessly drank her sister’s sake, had become drunk.

“Funyafunya”(Razshia)

“Moh, this child….she’s weak against alcohol.”(Rasanasha)

“Ara a, are you alright?”

Rasanasha went to prepare some medicine which will sober up anyone who had gotten drunk. While asking Yuusuke to support Razshia so she would not fall off from her chair. Rasanasha began searching and digging around the cupboards, but it seems that it had ran out apparently.

“I’m sorry, I’ll go buy some immediately….could you look after Shia?”(Rasanasha)

“Ah yes yes, no problem.”(Yuusuke)

“Mufu~Yuu~suke~san”(Razshia)

“OiOi, you’ll fall, stay still, please.”(Yuusuke)

The appearance of Yuusuke soothing someone who was drunk was quite a comforting sight. It was because in his original world, he had been trained by a bad drunk woman from his own family, thus he was accustomed on how to treat people like Razshia who were weak against alcohol.

“Thank you for your help.” as Rasanasha left the room quickly. The stimulant should still be in effect, thus resulting in a situation whereby one will fall as there was no longer any nuisances.

Since the last thing that was holding Yuusuke back was gone, Razshia entered her last phase of temptation.

“Sleepy~, go to Shia’s room~”

“Ng, I understand. Is it here?”

Yuusuke moved to the room which he was directed to while supporting Razshia’s drooping body.

During that time, while being attached and waddling across, Razshia was waiting for a hand to makes it’s way to her breast or butt, after an extended period of time, she began feeling uncomfortable with Yuusuke’s overly gentlemanly behavior.

Thus she began wondering did the intelligence group report referring to the target was true, according to the report he had already pushed down someone before.

‘Don’t tell me, there was a mistake in the understanding of his taste in women…?”

But, Razshia had confidence that even if someone had different tastes she would be able to sway that person. As long as there is the pleasure stimulant, no one would be

able to resist an innocent and defenceless girl, who they like, right in front of their eyes.

‘Come eat me’ as she incited him, while facing towards him on her bed.

“Ng….it feels good….”

Enjoying the feeling of the bed sheets with her teary eyes, Razshia wore a faint smile.

It seems that her rolling over has caused 3 of her buttons to unfasten, thus the disarranged clothes opened up to show her breast, her white glossy skin, her collarbone and boobs could be seen moving up and down to match her breathing. Just a little more, if one were to pull and drag down, the thin cloth, her nipples that are currently hidden would be revealed.

Yuusuke got close to the bed, as his hands reached out to straighten the dishevelled clothes~~

‘Yes, here he comes!’

She was thinking that the rolling might have done the trick, but his hand stopped and fastened the button covering her chest, next he gently pulled out the sheet that was trapped under her body and covers her.

Next he strokes Razshia’s hair once, said “goodnight” and left the room.

‘.....huh??’

To prepare water for her, Yuusuke left the room and he ran into Rasanasha. In fact, she had been on standby waiting for her chance, she did not consider that Yuusuke would come out, thus she didn’t have time to hide, she was caught totally unprepared.

“Ah, that’s fast. By the way I had carried your sister into her room.”

“Eh? Ah, ye, yes sorry for the trouble.”

The corps uniform which Yuusuke wore granted various protective effects, included amongst them was a detoxification effect and an anti-sedative effect.

Therefore, the special stimulant which was powerful for a short period of time lost it’s potency in an instant, thus Razshia’s temptation attacks felt like “oh, cute” attempts.

If only it had gone as how the girls planned~~

‘Shia….! I even left to give you a headstart!’

‘That was quick victory!’

And so the scene of “A man facing the honesty of good convenience women”, the two sisters were supposed to compete for him overnight, and he was supposed to be in for a binding play but~~

“Well then, I’ll see you later, thanks for today’s meal. Rasanasha’s home cooking was

delicious.”

“No,nono, you’re too humble….”

Rasanasha confused by what happened, stood at the entrance and gave her farewell. As soon as Yuusuke’s figure disappeared down the passageway, Razshia came out of the room swearing after stomping and kicking the bed.

“What the heck is with that guy! Is he not interested in girls!?”

She couldn’t believe that she couldn’t seduce him, and her pride was hurt! While soothing Razshia’s temper, Rasanasha had noticed that she herself felt relief that the plan had failed, thus she was confused as to why she had such a conflicting feeling.

On the way back to the royal district, Yuusuke bumped into a dozen armed knights running through in front of him. Wondering what had happened he looked towards the commoner districts which they were heading towards and there were quite a lot of knights gathered there.

There were quite a number of small organized troops, they began to move in response to their orders from a person who looked like their commander. Wondering what happened Yuusuke tried to calling out to the knights passing by who were assigned to a new location.

“Ahh, Ambassador-dono….it seems like there is a large-scale attack from Gazzetta.”

According to his story, it seems that they had gotten information about a large Gazzetta army that had gathered in the west forest, they had rendezvoused with their scouts and the sighting of 500 cavalry from the Gazzetta’s cavalry troop have been confirmed. Thus they have received an emergency call to prepare for an all out attack.

“That many….”

“Well, ambassador-dono doesn’t need to worry, the walls of this city have never been broken.”

So in a hurry, to get to his assignment, like a good knight he saluted and left.

“The thing that Isotta had felt, was it really just this….?”

For now, due to the emergency, Yuusuke was rushing back to his companions whom were in the royal district.

Chapter 51: Fall of the Empty Castle

Elite Gazzetta troops were walking through an old hidden passage that had not been touched by anyone for five hundred years. The village oracle, Ayuukas, from the village of the white clan, who was accompanying them as a guide, muttered in a quiet, yearning voice.

"Most of the remaining passages were destroyed… but this one seems to have remained untouched after all."

"But why did they leave this single passage untouched? There has not been even a single trap here yet."

"Because of this"

"…evil beasts?"

Ayuukas pointed at the floor before them, where the bones of a long dead evil beast laid scattered about, now but a testament of its former strength.

Successive generations of the Divine Parliament have been doing their best to search and destroy any remaining hidden tunnels that could compromise the safety of Patrucia Nost. However, it seemed that a pack of evil beats had settled in this passage as their den. The Divine Parliament of that time decided that they were suitable watchdogs and left the tunnel untouched.

"Even if they were evil beasts, they could not survive without food."

Noticing the traces of cannibalism on the corpses, Ayuukas could only pray that they had found a better life in the other world.

***

In the ancient fortress, remodeled to be the living district, the central command and supporting institutions controlling the entirety of Nossentes was situated in a tower that was located in the royalty district.

The tower that once belonged to the white clan's castle was the former symbol of the clan, it was a six-story tower that had a nearly cylindrical shape. The third floor of the tower was connected to the fortress section through four drawbridges. If these bridges were blocked, the entire governing structure of Nossentes would be paralyzed.

At the bottom of the tower, there was a well that allowed the people in the tower to have their own water source. The first and second floors were comprised of servant rooms, kitchens, and food storerooms. The third and fourth floors were used as barracks and stables, as well as used to house the military carriages.

The fifth floor housed the living quarters of the government staff, conference rooms, and guest rooms. The guest rooms, however, were reserved for royal guests, thus Fonclanc's ambassador's party, including the Darkness God Corps, did not have permission to enter it.

The stairs leading up to the sixth floor was unlike any other. Upon climbing them you

would suddenly arrive in a vast garden. It was a so called sky garden. A dome that was built near the center of the garden was called the Divine Halls.

The tower had enough emergency supplies so that one hundred people could survive the siege for more than one month.

***

"The forces in the forest started moving according to the schedule."

"Good, then… Let us start moving as well."

Inside of the administrative district, Shinha was hiding behind the corner with his selected elite troops, the central tower being clearly visible before them.

Shinha left half of his original force behind at the Sea of Trees to support their retreat and to act as a diversion, and took the remaining troops along with him to infiltrate Patrucia Nost under the cover of the night. Presently, he was waiting for his chance to attack the central tower.

Divine parliament ministers usually did not leave the tower, however they were attending a dinner party for the Fonclanc's ambassador tonight, and had left the tower heading towards the imperial district. Consequentially, the drawbridge that was usually raised up, was being left lowered, awaiting the return of the delegation.

Shinha spread his infiltration force around in such manner that they would be able to monitor all drawbridges of the central tower at all times. He then ordered Gazzetta's army, hidden in the forest to the south to move, creating a distraction that would allow him to take the tower of the Divine Parliament.

Matching the timing with the departure of the Divine Parliament's carriages, his group would attack the convoy, take the guards down in melee and enter the interior of the tower. Once inside they would lower the remaining drawbridges, allowing his remaining troops to charge in.

The entirety of the political body of Nossentes was concentrated within this tower. Thus, if the Divine Parliament was able to seclude themselves within the tower, even if Shinha was able to occupy the fortress (residential district) for some time, Nossentes' military power would survive and would eventually isolate Shinha's forces.

Although Gazzetta warriors held the edge over Nossentes' knights in individual combat skills, the knights could utilize the mobility of their individual groups and would outmatch the white tribe soldiers' tactic wise due to the free reign over the wind arts communications.

Thus, if Nossentes' troops were able to draw the battle out long enough, they would gain a sizeable advantage over the infiltrators.

However, if the Divine Parliament and the central tower were to fall, Nossentes' knights, used to the constant control of wind arts communications, would be reduced to nothing more than a disorderly mob.

From common soldier to commanding officer, in this army everyone excelled at precisely carrying out orders given from above. They have never received any training

or experience on making their own decisions when met with unexpected circumstances. "Don't think – move!" was the slogan that was drilled into them during training.

This was the reason that artless acted on these seemingly absurd guerilla tactics.

***

"Prime minister, was it really alright?"

"The matter of the Fonclanc's ambassador? This is a state of emergency damn it!"

Having received an urgent report regarding the movement of Gazzetta's troops, the Prime minister of the fire arts came to a stop. Despite saying that, he was snickering inside, as this news was a perfect opportunity for him to avoid the rather boring dinner party. He did not feel any stress because the skirmishes in the vicinity of the western forest were a common occurrence.

And still, it had been a long running custom for the Divine Parliament ministers to take cover in the central tower during such crises.

The carriage with the prime minister of the Divine Parliament was approaching the drawbridge that was usually guarded from both sides, when suddenly…

"GO GO GO, everyone move out!!!"

"?!! ENEMY ATTACK!"

All of the artless soldiers left their cover and in unison rushed towards the bridge. The defenders were stupefied for a brief moment by the attack, they had believed that it was impossible, but soon regained their senses and started taking up defensive stances. The two opposing sides clashed on the drawbridge.

Shinha stood on the vanguard of his troops and challenged the two – three times larger enemy to battle. The cavalry at the forest was commanded by one of his most trusted escorts (guards) that he had personally prepared for this task. (T.N. probably removing the last sentence or moving it to where the cavalry will be specifically referenced)

***

Nearly at the same time, five hundred strong White Sword Cavalry soldiers that had been gathered inside the western forest started advancing towards Patrucia Nost's southern wall.

Defenders responded with divine arts and arrows, but the vanguard of the cavalry were equipped with shields. Using the shields to survive the defenders' counter, the attacking army managed to maintain the pace.

When they approached the gate, the horsemen trampled Nossentes' forces that were amassed in front of the gate. Because of this, footmen, following behind the cavalry, were able to quickly catch up to their vanguard. Soldiers who managed to penetrate into Nossentes' knight's ranks were trashing left and right with their swords and shields.

"Guah! This is not an ordinary attack. These guys are bent on breaking through the

gate!”

“Where are the instructions from the Divine Parliament?! If we are not able to take control of the battle soon, the damage will be serious!”

Soldiers at the gates were acting on their standing orders to return fire towards the attackers. These orders did not cover the case of the Gazzetta army penetrating their ranks, mingling with their own troops, and forcing them into a hand to hand combat.

Their main strength was cooperation between multiple units. Therefore they usually employed tactics with long range covering fire with quick rotations between attack and defense between the multiple groups.

While Nossentes’ troops continued following standing orders and were continuing to engage the Gazzetta soldiers in front of the gate, they received a notice about a new attack at the eastern gate.

The scale of the attack was not known, however if Gazzetta mustered a similar force there, the eastern gate would not hold.

Gazzetta had infiltrated the city with spies who had stayed hidden for a long time for the sake of this one attack. They had successfully disrupted wind art communications, thus Nossentes’ knights response towards the attack on the central tower was delayed.

By severing communications, Gazzetta was attempting to split the defending troops between the eastern gate, the western gate, and the central tower. On top of blocking wind arts communications, Gazzetta’s troops inside Patrucia Nost have blocked the paths for messengers so the runners had a hard time arriving in time with the new orders.

“Hey, what are you doing?! Gazzetta’s troops are closing in! Don’t open the gate!”

Suddenly, the western gate slowly started to open. One of the commanders that were arguing between themselves noticed this and raised his voice at the knight, responsible for the gate lever.

The knight slowed down on what he was doing, however the way he held himself made commander remember something very ominous.

“You…? It can’t be!”

With a broad smile on his face the knight unsheathed his sword and taunted his ex-comrades.

***

A spy, who managed to slip amongst the knights during the chaos has opened the gate and allowed the Gazzetta army to invade Patrucia Nost. Once the troops had invaded, they started opening hidden passages one by one, allowing even more troops to flood the city.

The residential area inside the fortress was taken over in a flash. Nossentes’ troops started grouping up and retreating towards the royalty district. Only then did they realize that the central tower was the main target of this attack.

All of the bridges that were usually raised during the emergencies were now lowered. Knights that were usually defending the bridges were nowhere to be seen and the polished floor and pillars were soiled with blood, some of them even cracked. Torn cloth and pieces of armor were scattered around the place.

“What in the hell… is this…?”

The sight before their eyes was obvious – a battle had also happened here, however they had not received any notices regarding it. Standard protocol warranted that in case of a direct attack on the central tower, an army wide emergency was to be announced. In case of such an emergency troops were to abandon all other defenses and gather at the tower.

“I am Shinha Trueyard, the king of Gazzetta. We have taken control of the Divine Halls and captured the prime minister of the Divine Parliament. Nossentes now belongs to us!”

Shinha’s voice resounded over the entire city, reaching into every little alleyway of Patrucia Nost.

Chapter 52: Divine Parliament's Conspiracy

A little while time after King Shinha's announcement.

Despite it being late at night, a long line of the city's inhabitants stretched before the northern gate. Shinha was watching it through the Divine Mirror. This mirror was a special device that was constructed in the center of the Divine Halls and allowed it's user to look into the distance.

It was said that this mirror was created by an ancient Evil God. It had the power to show any place within Patrucia Nost or it's surroundings from a bird's eye view. It could practically be used to track the movements of anyone within the mirrors effective area.

The reason why the cooperation between the different knight squads of the Nossentes' military was so good was because of this mirror.

The approximate range that the mirror could be used in was the city itself and the distance around half a day's trip with a carriage around it. Thus one could see the entire area until the edge of the forest in great detail. The mirror was the reason that Nossentes knight corps became extremely weak once they entered the forest.

Currently, Gazzetta had occupied two gates and the central tower. Including the invading forces that took the tower, the cavalry that stormed the gates, and the spies, previously sent into the city, Gazzetta military strength numbered slightly less than eight hundred people. This force was not enough to completely occupy a city like Patrucia Nost, however reinforcements were already on their way.

Occupied by a nation of the artless, divine art users had no idea what to expect from their occupants. Thus city folk began fleeing to the nearby cities before Gazzetta army arrived.

Currently Gazzetta forces were glaring at Nossentes knights that had taken up a defensive formation near the central tower. It was troublesome to prevent city folk from fleeing like this. However, less people would mean less trouble after occupation, so Shinha did not even bother to stop the fleeing people.

With this, trouble after occupying the city was reduced to the minimum. The price for that was the remaining members of the Divine Parliament. They had surely mixed in between the refugees, and escaped their would-be captors.

"We were only able to capture one member of the Divine Parliament, however we at least got an influential one…"

"It would be troublesome if the remaining members fled to another country and established a government in exile…"

Thinking about the countries that believed in the same religion as Nossentes, Fonclanc was the first country that came to mind. Trentorietta was a country that was antagonistic towards Gazzetta, however it had no military power to speak of. Although Blue Garden also believed in the same religion, it did not approve of the caste system thus the Divine Parliament ministers were unlikely to find refuge there.

"What about the whereabouts of the Evil God?"

"Unfortunately, we were unable to pin him down."

They have confirmed that Fonclanc's ambassador had escaped with refugees through a separate route.

The ambassador's party had boarded a simple carriage which then drove to the northeastern wall. Shinha's men were only able to note that they used some sort of a special tunnel to pass the protective wall. The tunnel itself was gone already, but the soldiers were able to confirm several footprints and carriage tracks on both sides of the wall that looked like those people passed through like the wall was not even there.

"Hehehe, Yuusuke probably did it."

Chasing an escaping carriage was impossible so Shinha had to give up on catching Yuusuke.

"Ah well, send a search party after them, just in case."

"Yes sir!"

"You are rough as always, little Shinha"

"… Grandmother, am I not only doing my job?"

Having finished inspecting the tower, Ayuukas approached Shinha, who had just finished instructing the troops, tasked with occupying the city. She addressed the king of Gazzetta in a manner that she used to call him when he was little. Although that was an unacceptable way to address a king, with a casual "Here" she passed him the documents that she had found inside the tower.

"The location of the office or the vault had not changed over the years, so I found these immediately."

"Hmm… As I thought, they were behind the incursions into Fonclanc's territory."

"Aren't troop composition and budget documents enough of an evidence to confirm that?"

"I know, but these documents could still be useful to us."

While he was concentrated on rebuilding the White Clan's empire, Shinha thought to use these documents to capture the escaped Divine Parliament ministers, who were likely fleeing towards Fonclanc.

"First of all, let's send a messenger to Risha's place. I'll ask her to organize a search party for the escapees."

Having reclaimed the former castle of the White Clan empire, the current king started walking the path to revive its long lost glory.

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"We will enter the forest soon. We will use a different route from thereon, we will not be able to use the carriage as before." (T.N. probably means that they have to let some

people off as it will be too heavy to ride in the forest otherwise)

"Is that so? Thank you for everything you have done to us. You have been of great help!"

"No, no… We were only able to escape because of you all."

"So did we."

At the edge of a forest, locates south east of Patrucia Nost, Darkness God Corps – Ambassador's party separated from a platoon of Nossentes knights.

Around the time that Gazzetta army attacked the southern wall, Yuusuke was returning from the royalty district. On his way back he spotted a knight, arguing with his corps. When he heard their reasons, he asked for Isotta's assistance. The girl immediately sensed multiple artless towards the direction of the central tower, however she could not comprehend their intentions. Although Isotta tried to ask their escort-surveillance companions about the tower, however the escort perceived that as an attempt to probe into their country's most secret institution and harshly told Isotta off.

Yuusuke tried his best to explain to his escorts that neither he, nor his subordinates had any intentions to probe into the secrets of Nossentes. At that time a knight from the central tower rushed to them. At the same time a notice from Shinha resounded throughout the city.

That moment, everyone stood dumbfounded, unable to comprehend the situation. They soon noticed the Divine Council's ministers and Fonclanc ambassador's groups rushing back from the dinner party. With this everyone got back to their senses and started busily running around.

Avoiding streets that Gazzetta's occupational troops would likely use, everyone reached the residential district and procured a carriage. The Divine Parliament ministers had disguised themselves as ordinary townsfolk and had intermingled themselves amongst the commoners, and had escaped using service passage along with some of the knights who had disguised themselves in a similar manner.

The Darkness God Corps and Ambassador party used the procured carriage and cut through the buildings towards the same route that they used to come to Nossentes.

Yuusuke customized walls to open paths and created the shortest possible road to the city walls for his party. The flashy method he used to escape also became useful to Divine Parliament ministers because it caught Gazzetta troops' attention and allowed them to escape.

Yuusuke was moving his finger in the air and muttered "Execute". Knight's eyes became round once a tunnel, leading outside of the city, suddenly opened before them.

"Uhm… Yuusuke-san, will we be fine by ourselves? I heard that there are evil beasts inside the forest."

"I think we'll be fine. We've had no problems on our way here, my guys are quite skilled after all."

"Hey! Why are you pointing at me?"

Razshia seemed uneasy about travelling through the forest with Yuusuke's party and asked for reassurance. To calm her down Yuusuke jokingly pointed towards Fonke.

Yuusuke saw the sisters (Rashanaasha and Razshia) amongst the people that were lining up in front of the tunnel entrance. Thinking that Rashanasha had come here to visit her hometown, he called out to her and invited her to go back to Fonclanc together. It was inevitable that Razshia would also join them.

They separated with the Divine Parliament ministers and their escorts, who headed towards the north-west wall of the city and headed north east. They planned to head north until they reached the peninsula in Trentorieta's territory and then send a wind art's transmission to Fonclanc's port town and ask for a boat to ferry them over the lake.

They asked for one knight to accompany them as they planned to leave the carriage once they reached the peninsula.

Because it was dangerous to travel through the forest during the night, Yuusuke created an underground shelter for them and the carriage that was barely undetectable from the outside. The party spent the night in this shelter.

It was probably persistence of a Japanese character, but although no one would have minded cuddling together and spending the night in their sleeping bags, Yuusuke went as far as to create separate rooms for everyone in his party.

Members of the Darkness God Corps and Ambassador party were already used to this, but the sisters and the remaining knight were surprised by the unique divine art.

When everyone settled down to rest for tomorrow's journey, the two fake sisters met in one of the rooms and discussed quietly amongst themselves under a minute light on a small oilwood fire. Rashanasha could return to Fonclanc like that without any risks, however to Razshia, the situation was much more complicated.

Some people amongst the Fonclanc's higher-ups knew her, mainly because of her "Honeybey" occupation.

"I give up. I can't believe everything turned out like this."

Not only did they failed to seduce the captain of the Darkness God Corps, the country that they he was supposed to deflect to was also gone. For the first time, Razasha complained about their situation. Although, the possibility of success of this mission was not very high, so the failure was not entirely their fault.

"Did you think about returning back to your family, Razshia?"

"Of course I can't. Not in this line of work. Also, you can call me Shia."

They understood that, depending on the situation, they might be forced to continue playing sisters for an undefined time. Visibly tired, Razshia fluttered her hands.

"Hey… what kind of place is Fonclanc?"

"Eh? You don't have any acquaintances there?"

"I don't. I haven't traveled outside Patrucia Nost even once."

"That's a tough situation to be in…"

As a child she had only traveled as far as the next district. Having been selected from orphans as someone who had shown potential, she had been trained in the arts of seduction. Since then she had done nothing but train and use her skills.

"When I struggled to perfect my skills, I sometimes became afraid that I don't remember my real self anymore. Sometimes my target developed real feelings for me. Seeing them die was the worst." (T.N. changed this to first person. I think it sounds better this way.)

No matter how many missions did Razshia undertake, all of them were fixated in that huge birdcage, Patrucia Nost.

"I understand , but at the same time I don't. I can't fully comprehend how you feel." (T.N. literally:I don't have similar experience to fully relate to you)

Because of her work, Rashanasha had heard a lot of gossip. She also had to analyze the information. What she wrote in her reports almost always were written from the perspective of other people. The only hobby she had that was not related to work was creating medicine.

"Although I knew it deep inside, it is different once you actually experience it."

"Naturally."

Razshia was much more talkative due to all her worries. Rashanasha calmly heard her out. Just this once they had forgotten their superior – subordinate relationship and talked to each other like true sisters.

"Rasha."

"Yes?"

"Thanks."

"No problem…"

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Having left Partucia Nost, the remaining ministers of the Divine Parliament had separated from the refugee convoy and took the northern main road along the lake. They had traveled the road for a little bit, entered the forest and set up their base of operations there. Currently they were busy processing intelligence that was brought to them by special operations squad that was returning to Nossentes' capital from Blue Garden.

Their primary objective right now was to use this information to create a plan to take back Patrucia Nost.

"The situation seems dire. Currently Patrucia Nost is occupied by roughly three thousand Gazzetta soldiers and the townspeople are—"

"I don't care about the townspeople! I want you to report every little action that either of the armies make."

Maybe because they were not used to camping out like this, but the remaining members of the Divine Parliament were in a terrible mood. They were standing around a map, spread out on a simple table. Their spittle was flying around as they barked out their instructions.

"There are no movements in Fonclanc, but they barely even had time to get the information about this. Blue Garden has strengthened their border with Gazzetta and Trentorietta remains silent as usually."

Due to the dense forest, the Sea of Trees, which covered the entire territory of Trentorietta, the country was said to be an impregnable fortress. Ministers of the Parliament thus threw this option out of their consideration and focused on monitoring the movements within Fonclanc and Gazzetta.

"It would be good if we had the Darkness God Corps here…"

"It can't be helped. They have to escort the ambassador's party."

"We should sent out an assistance request to Fonclanc."

It was the evening of the second day after the fall of Patrucia Nost. The ministers were arguing over how much they should involve Fonclanc into this, when they received a report that the "Honeybey" has met up with the Darkness God Corps.

"This is truly a fortunate turn of events"

"Yeah, with this we can put that prearranged plan into motion."

"Immediately order the covert ops to start their mission."

The ministers planned to stay in this forest for a while so they ordered their guards to secure the perimeter and gather the intelligence about the surrounding area.

The ministers planned to stay in this forest for a while so they ordered their guards to secure the perimeter and gather intelligence on the surrounding area, yet none of the knights had noticed the emergence of a new unit.

Grasping an unexpected opportunity, the voices of the ministers returned to their usual volumes. They had prearranged a plan that would make Fonclanc and Gazzetta jump at each other's throats and they had started giving fine instructions to the operatives that should make it all possible.

The knights thought of the Divine Parliament as something more sacred, more holy. Thus, seeing the "people from above the clouds", the ministers, acting like that, doubts started sprouting in the knights' hearts.

Absolute control. Equality amongst the castes. Deep spiritual knowledge. These were the leaders that guided their country since the ancient times.

["… this is not just a simple strategy…? No, one controlling the country does not only rely on diplomacy… But, how do I say this…."]

However most of the missions for the covert ops were handed down directly by the Divine Parliament. A rumor was floating for a while that the Divine Parliament relied more on their covert ops then the simple knights.

Thus the situation that was happening in from of these simple knights had thrown their hearts in disarray.

“So, you should do it like this.”

“Yes, failure will not be forgiven.”

After receiving their instructions in from of the bewildered knights, the cover ops troops left for Fonclanc’s harbor town on the opposite shore of the lake.

Chapter 53: The fleeting song of the honeybee (Part 1)

The plan to make Fonclanc and Blue Garden fight each other that the parliament had put together required their special fortress to attack the Darkness God Corps and the ambassador's party while disguised as Gazzetta troops. It was quite a simple tactic to make two countries fight each other.

Since the opponent is Blue Garden's elite troupe and Gazzetta's cavalry troop, in order to repel them, they made use of Fonclanc's best team: the Darkness God Corps. No matter how much one is a veteran from many battles, there is no guarantee that they would fight and cross swords up front.

Therefore they decided to make use of their spy, "Honeybee" Razshia who was currently traveling with the Darkness God Corps party. Although, she is not skilled in assasination, she was adept in handling drugs. It would be good if the Darkness God Corps could be used to stall the time of attack.

Under normal circumstances they would not be able to act, but because Volmes' unit has been destroyed and that guy had become Fonclanc's prisoner of war. No one in Fonclanc would expect Nossentes to send another squad under the current circumstances.

It was supposed to be a plan where Fonclanc and Gazzetta would be in conflict while they would have a friendly pact with Fonclanc.

"No matter how much those barbarians try to build up their forces, there is no way they would be able to surpass our wisdom."

The special unit was to conceal themselves in the harbour city in advance, while the Darkness God Corps would be arriving from Trent Rietta, thus they had to prepare for overnight camping.

On the west side of the forest, which extend from the north to the south, there was an untouched and barren plains without anything on it.

"So Isotta is on cooking duty today?"

"Ye-es, I have stocked up on seasonings from Nossentes...I'll do my best to make a tasty meal."

"Hoho, I'm looking forward to it."

"Ah~ I am hungry~"

Thus, that immediately drove the Darkness God Corps and the ambassadors traveling along with them to head inside the building. "Where did that come from!" Stunned by the weird situation, Rasanasha and Razshia, both the sisters and the Knight from Nossentes who were following them were stunned and quickly followed behind them.

"Hey, who the hell is Yuusuke? I have never heard before of that kind of divine arts."

"I also….have not heard any more than what you know."

The two people that were whispering could be viewed as sisters who got along well.

Late night~~

Everyone was fast asleep, Yuusuke came to the roof (actually, it's just the 2nd floor) to catch a breath of fresh air, and he found the figure of Razshia standing there. She seemed to be lost in her thoughts while staring at the stars.

A sight which is hardly seen, Razshia didn't notice someone was approaching her, as she was lost in her thoughts. She didn't have the opportunity to go outside to the huge wilderness from the confined space of Patrucia Nost, thus she never had the feeling of "Freedom" up until now.

She was lost in her thoughts, visualising how simple it was that she could, just like that, continue to move away from Nossentes and forget all about her work.

The silly little conversations that were made during the trip, up until now. The light hearted chats during dinner. Not knowing when the scenario will change, she grasped onto the moment, dropping her own guard. As though something had mixed and spread around within her, but at the same time it stands as an opportunity for her to polish up her abilities.

Ingrained within her was the way of life of a spy.

"Normally, what would someone do…."(Razshia)

"What in particular?"(Yuusuke)

"Ng, the life of normal people~! Arghh!"(Razshia)

Answering a question that someone had asked when she was talking to herself, Razshia jumped up in surprise as she saw Yuusuke's figure standing next to her.

"Ah, how long have you been creeping up behind me!"(Razshia)

"Not really for long, only just now. I just felt that it is creepy to just watch you without sounding out my opinion."(Yuusuke)

Razshia unknowingly did a Tsukkomi as Yuusuke quietly approached her and answered her question. (TL notes: Tsukkomi? Refer to link http://lang-8.com/144559/journals/503580)

"That's a skill right!"(Razshia)

"Yup"(Yuusuke)

Answering nonchalantly, Yuusuke who was standing next to Razshia being confused and had her mouth wide open, was laughing.

"This is way better."(Yuusuke)

"….what's better?"(Razshia)

"Being natural of course."(Yuusuke)

Razshia had a shocked and stiffened face. Realizing that she had forgot about her own acting while her target pointed it out to her, she began reprimanding herself inside her mind. And then, for some reason or another, her shyness took control of her feelings and her face became hot.

"Why…..How."(Razshia)

Losing her control of her emotions, she began to blush nonstop. For Razshia, this was the first time she had encountered such a situation.

"Hahahaha finally I can see the true you, this is a good night."(Yuusuke)

"Ng? Eh?"(Razshia)

"Go to sleep early" Yuusuke spoke in a friendly voice towards the panicking Razshia, as his figure disappeared, leaving a grain of light. He had used instant movement through customization by replacing a part of the building. Due to the range it's limited, but it truly is a teleportation skill.

"Wh…..What, you mean….!"(Razshia)

Realising her acting was exposed and that she had shown her actual personality, she began to compose herself from her unknown shame after seeing the absurd divine arts.

From here on, other than pretending to be blood related to Rasanasha, she could drop the acting and concentrate on working together, as Razshia's feelings became light.

Dawn, the next morning. Everyone was seated facing each other while having breakfast.

"Rasa-ane's breast to body proportion is too slim, isn't it better for you to eat a little more?"(Razshia)

"Re~Really I wonder….?"(Rasanasha)

"What does Yuusuke-san think about it?"(Razshia)

"Don't ask me that kind of question!"(Yuusuke)

Although the situation remained the same, today's mood had changed compared to yesterday's. It hadn't gone from bad to the worst, but seemingly had turned for the better, "Why?" as a directed question and staring towards a certain black man in suspicion began.

"...Captain~"(Fonke)

"What's up? Fonke."(Yuusuke)

"For some reason, the atmosphere around Shia-chan seems to have changed."(Fonke)

“Yeah.”(Yuusuke)

Yuusuke was silently eating his meal when Fonke brought up the question, as Aisha began glancing on the sideline.

Although it was the normal ranting of Fonke, this time Aisha wasn’t giving him an earful, she seem determined to know the truth while feigning ignorance, as she listened attentively. Because of that, there was a surprising hand raise.

“Erm...Captain.”(Isotta)

“What’s up? Isotta.”(Yuusuke)

“Yesterday night, for a short while….you weren’t in your room….?”(Isotta)

It was an uncommon sight for the shy green hair girl of the Darkness God Corps to voice out her thoughts, as Fonke had a startled look on his face. “Isotta has spoken…..!” Vermeer muttered out in surprised tone. Surprised a little by the sudden outburst, Yuusuke returned to his usual slacker mood.

“Don’t tell me...you have been tracing my presence?”(Yuusuke)

“Eh? EH! I~I, it wasn’t my intention, Rashia-san also, headed out for a stroll...that.”(Isotta)

Yuusuke’s attempts to dodge the question was shot down immediately by Isotta, and thus began the onslaught from Fonke.

“CA-PTA-IN”(Fonke)

“What is it?”(Yuusuke)

“In other words, you were with Shia-chan last night?”(Fonke)

“Wait a minute.”

Shocked...even the ambassadors and the accompanist knight were all making a commotion across the breakfast table.

“It seems that this has completely turned out, as usual”, as the sight of Yuusuke predicting, dispelled the subtle air around the dining table, while trying to give a brief explanation of Razshia’s change.

“On the Roof! Looking at Stars! How daring….seems like someone no longer cares.”

“NOISY.”

“Don’t purposely misinterpret it!”

Fonke took a hit from Yuusuke’s and Aisha’s Double tsukkomi. It seems like it became one of the relaxing moments, even the usually strict and formal ambassadors who were tied down to etiquette and the usually stiff Nossentes Knight had began to soften up.

As the centre of the topic, Razshia herself, began to opened up comfortably to the warm atmosphere of the Darkness God Corps.

After proceeding smoothly, they arrived at the northernmost peninsula on the evening of the third day. They will be stopping for one night on the shores of the lake while waiting for the arrival of the boat that they had requested from the port city. Because fishing was done, a series of fish cuisine was served on the dining table, thus it became a modest farewell party for the knight who they had journeyed with up till now.

"Now then, please be careful on your way back."

"The situation over there seems tough too, take care of yourself."

He will be heading towards the northwest of Nossentes, as he had to join up with the main force. And like that, it became the morning of the 4th day of escaping from Patrucia Nost. Seeing off the knight in the carriage, Yuusuke and his team boarded the 3 boats that came to pick them up, and they headed towards the harbour city across moon mirror lake.

"Is this Razshia's first time riding a boat?"

"Un, yes…...ah Fish! It's really swimming."

Timidly looking out the edge of the boat into the surface of the lake, Razshia was showing child-like reactions as the fishes swam by. During her more than 10 years of life, she who had not stepped out of Patrucia Nost had almost no knowledge of this unknown world.

Looking at the childish appearance of Razshia, Yuusuke was convinced that "this is her original appearance", while Rasanasha who knew the actual situation was compassionate of how the current situation was.

"This place is….Fonclanc's harbor city."(Razshia)

Looking up, it wasn't a ceiling of stones, it was a huge sky that stretch endlessly even til "the outside of town." For a moment, Razshia stood there admiring the scenery.

Overwhelmed by the bustling atmosphere of the port city, she had yet again realized the huge difference of knowledge from the book of information and the reality. Standing in the location, feeling the wind blowing, the interaction of the people coming and going to and fro from the city, as if the whole city was like a enormous organism.

The party had arrived at the port city around noon, they headed to the inn which they had previously stayed at, and reported to Sanc Adiet about the recent event that had happened in Nossentes. Until the pick-up carriage arrived they would be taking a break in the port city.

Arriving back to their homeland, the ambassadors could finally relax, while thanking the Darkness God Corps who had played their role of escort well.

"I believe it's generally safe when we arrived here, though there was that strife which happened when we had arrived here for the first time."

"It's better not to relax so much until we have arrived at Sanc Adiet."

"Yeah. That said, until we reach the palace, no one is to slack off."

"Fumu…..that's true, it's as you guys said."

Yuusuke nodded to ascertain Vermeer and Shaheed's speech, as he urged the ambassadors to stay alert too and they agreed.

"OHHH, Shirley-chan Von-Chan ~ I am coming over right now~~!"

And just one person, a user of the wind arts, seem to have relaxed and dashed off down the streets of the port city. Yuusuke and the ambassadors pretended that they didn't see anything. Taking it as "he is gathering information" as an official reason.

In the room for the sisters, the 'elder sister' Rasanasha looks out from the window towards the city skyline as she voiced out to the 'little sister' Razshia.

"Shia, let's go shopping."

"Eh? What are we buying?"

"Clothing for you."

"Ah…..okay, I guess so. Yea, let's go."

That night, due to the confusion, Razshia came along with only the clothes she was wearing, she didn't bring any other clothes along with her. In the first place, she did not have many personal possessions to begin with. She was always given mission essential items only.

Buying whatever she needed for herself in the city. For such an obvious reason, she didn't have the experience of purchasing things outside of the mission. Even if there is something that she fancied, due to nature of the missions to act as "a different person", she wasn't allowed to own anything.

Of course, the money that was use to purchase items, like drugs, were all issued by the accounting department officers whereby they only gave the necessary amount each time.

"....erm for the shopping, I don't need to pay for any expenses right…?"

"This isn't a mission, it's from my personal purse."

"Ple~Please take care of me…."

"Ufufufu Don't worry about it."

2 very beautiful sisters could be seen walking along, viewing the stalls on the main streets of the port city. In anycase, they are the singing princess and the seduction operative. Both young and old, guy or girl will look back when they walked pass them.

On a later date, when Fonke heard about the story, "I could have been carrying their

luggage!” he will regret it very much that he had headed to the pub instead.

“~~this is the front of the west gate. Where we saw the operatives~~”

“~~Well, there’s still time before contact. If anyone is not tired, we will go confirm the target’s location~~”

Chapter 54: The fleeting song of the honeybee (Part 2)

“This is easy to move in, and is surprisingly warm too.”

“You should wear a hair ornament to go with it, I believe that you would look more attractive you know?”

The two sisters, Razshia and Rasanasha, had just returned from shopping. They were currently chatting while trying on a combination of different small ornaments and organising their loot.

Regardless of the mission, Razshia had no experience in choosing fashionable clothes for herself, thus buying items from the stalls along the main streets proved to be an enjoyable act. But abruptly, a feeling of anxiety began falling over the enjoyable mood.

“Is something wrong?”

“....yeah, kind of.”

She was thinking about the events that will unfold when she reaches Sanc Adiet, as there will be problems for her, such as trying to persuade someone of important standing to take her under his wing, and there is also the presence of the Earl who is the boss of Rasanasha in Fonclanc, thus no deception should be made.

Aside from the Nossentes sympathizers within the palace officials, there were only a few nobles who Razshia could persuade. Talking about persuading, it won’t be as sweet as the time around with Yuusuke, and there might be a chance where lies and deception are involved.

“Uuu....hick,hick”(Crying?)

“Haa What should I~I do…”

“This is troubling oo, no matter how powerful the man is in Fonclanc’s palace, no one can win against alcohol intoxication.”

“Wai~Wait a moment I don’t really remember it! To go against a country is~~”

Negotiating privately with palace officials(Nossentes symathizers) by using medicines to induce intoxication, and after that pretend to be a subordinate that was assaulted by the drunk official while gathering his weaknesses.

Forcing victims to cooperate is what they excel at. Using this same method, in which they have experience in, they will force Nossentes into cooperation. But if Razshia completes her mission, Rasanasha, who is known as her sister, will not come out of this unscathed.

“I think so….”

If Nossentes were to remain in ruins, I don’t believe the Earl will continue to harbour me, in the worst case scenario he would assassinate me to cover his tracks.

“Since we have come this far, it’s too late to turn back.”

“I see….so we should remain out of sight for as long as possible, it would be better for us to hide somewhere in the city for the time being.”

The moment they were to enter Sanc Adiet, she would first stay at Rasanasha’s house for the time being, a life of being unseen by the general public, and if she is spotted, they could secretly shift their residence to the outskirts of the city, and the chance of a palace official spotting them will also be reduced.

That evening, the two of them met up for a discussion about the main topic of Razshia’s place, if they were to be frank and to rely on Yuusuke entirely, in order words to get Princess Violet’s amnesty, it might be quite the task.

“Well, even though many people like Yuusuke, it’s probably impossible until that point.”

“Is...that so?”

“Because he’s the hero of Fonclanc don’t you know?”

It’s not good to expect sympathy from a military personnel, Razshia’s basis to chide any excessive expectation of the Darkness God Captain who is a hero was because of the elder like good people subordinates.

While the Darkness God Corps and the ambassadors were spending their time in the port city within the detention facilities of Sanc Adiet, Rasanasha’s boss, the Earl, was visiting an important interrogation that was on-going as an excuse.

“Ho, to take Patrucia Nost so easily.”

“There is still more than half of the Divine parliament’s troops moving around, so there should be some form of contact coming here.”

No longer having the backing of Nossentes, the Earl started an early interrogation of Volmes in an attempt to prevent him from spilling out everything. His intention was to gain insight of Volmes, as he will be in trouble with Nossentes ruined. Thus he had to imply to him(Volmes) to skillfully evade and buy time.

“The Remnants of Izapnar’s faction of Gazzetta or Blue Garden, or even if there might be a 3rd force hiding in the shadows. For the time being, it’s all up in the air.”

“Hmm, I see. So the Divine Parliament will make a provisional government while being exiled in Fonclanc for the meantime, while bluffing that their main forces are somewhere else”

The Earl nodded to Volmes foresight, as he conveyed a message to the other spies to gather at this detention facility.

“Now then…..kun, will you call on the interrogation officer?”

“.....What?”

After affirming the Earl's response, Volmes, requested to be transferred to interrogation room after the monitoring soldier came along to the front desk. Puzzled and thinking that Volmes might want to confess an important testimony, he went to call the interrogation officer over.

After some time, an interrogation officer and several soldiers had arrived at the interrogation room, there Volmes began to talk.

"The one who sent out an indication of a raid was the Divine Parliament of Nossentes."

Volmes who was notified about the Fall of Patrucia Nost began exposing the mastermind behind the artless village raid incident which were the orders by Nossentes's Divine Parliament. Fallen from grace from Blue garden, he found himself accepting a condition to be incorporated into the Special unit without any complaints.

Taking the command of the execution squad, and only limited to the moving the troops, the one holding actual commanding authority was the deputy who had died in battle in the port city, and he also explained that those who were in his former Blue Garden elite teams were also being monitored.

The fact that the deputy of the unit was responsible for the inspection, and since the subordinates of the original elite team were dead, there was no way for the secret of the imposter to leak out. Volmes believed it to be so.

"So in other words, you are saying that your actions were actually orders forced by the Divine Parliament?"

"....I see. You have to apologize to the people of Fonclanc for the great deal of trouble you have brought to them."

Volmes recognized the figure of Hivodir who came entering into the interrogation room with questions from the overview of the testimony. Volmes was aiming to improve his impression by showing a laudable attitude in order to gain credit and his freedom by presenting a sacrifice.

"Why, did you suddenly make these testimonies?" he severs the card which he had held onto, the answers to their questions.

"Earlier, the Earl that came to my interrogation was a person who had connections with the divine parliament." (TL notes: WHAO Backstab)

After affirming several Nossentes's spies, and saying that the residence he lived in is also being spied on. Knowing about the conspiracies and secret maneuvering of the Divine Parliament, he believed his life was being targeted and that his time was limited, so he confessed about everything he knew.

"He might be uneasy due to the fall of Patrucia Nost."

The Earl had came to warn Volmes that the Divine Parliament still exists and is going strong, and implied that he "Not say anything," reminding him of the consequences of being a spy of Nossentes.

"I have judged that it was a good opportunity to expose the truth to the light of day."

“I see, a logical decision.”

Seeing Hivodir’s nodding reaction, Volmes was gloating inside. But that was short lived. “However~~” Hivodir continued his words, and invited the people who were waiting outside the interrogation room by opening the door. Volmes expression immediately shrank.

“These 2 people, are from the crew who had attacked my house and everything in that village.”

“.....”

The 2 men were young. One of them was missing a part of his arm from the elbow up, while the other from the waist down had his back bent in a strange way. All the subordinates were supposed to have been buried by the Artless warrior and the Darkness God Crops.

(TL notes: Ouchie, this is some dark shit)

“Ah you guys are still alive! There was news that you were all dead.”

“.....”

Volmes performed a wink to his 2 former subordinates of the Fire Troupe, as a signal to cooperate with him.

During that night, there were eyes monitoring the 3 people who were out in pursuit of Hivodir, they were in a situation where the life and death of the entire team laid on them.

“That’s what he said, you guys aren’t mistaken about it right?”

“.....no”

“What the team leader had said….leave everything to us.”

The two former subordinates did not comply with the wink that Volmes had sent them. In fact, the 2 of them had already heard about some of the events which occurred at the port city and the current Patrucia Nost.

“These 2 people had admitted that they were persuaded by you to escape Blue Garden and defect to Nossentes.”

“No, that is…..”

“Not only that, it seems that in order to save yourself, you sacrificed all of your subordinates as a decoy in the port city~~”

After withdrawing from the port city, the remains of the victims of the fighting were being transported on the carriage, these bodies of the armed groups were being transported to the nearby forest and buried with the help of the residents of the city.

Most of the corpses of the armed group were burned down alongside the inn, except for 2 unnatural corpses that were discovered at the back of a house near the inn.

An underground secret tunnel was found beneath the inn to a nearby house, and to surmise, these two probably tried to escape using the tunnel. However, being in the middle of a fight, there was not one soldier who saw them.

One guy's head was cut clean off, the other had a burnt hole in his chest. From the evidence found, the chest seems to be pierced by a sword using a strengthening flame art.

"The equipment that Fonclanc soldiers uses are spears, but you have been using a sword."

"...."

Hivodir brought the 2 bodies back to the 2 original fire troupe members who survived the onslaught of Shinha and they had confirmed that they were colleagues of theirs.

The situation was explained to them when Volmes was caught, and they had apparently covered up the news of the dead body whom were their colleagues that died in the hands of Volmes, these 2 surviving members of the fire troupe had confessed that they escaped from Blue Garden.

They even spilled out that Volmes was the captain of Nossentes special corps and had always been acting in line with Nossentes and he had been dealing behind their backs without them knowing. As they testified about it.

"Furthermore, just a few days ago, such things had arrived in the palace."

"....still there should be something."

Hivodir took out a slip from his coat, and listed on it was a letter mark from Gazzetta.

The news of the fall of Patrucia Nost was received the next day, all of the Divine parliament's messenger birds were sent out to deliver the Gazzetta King's letter, within the letter was the Divine Parliament's plan and the spies that had infiltrated, and also all of the nobles who were connected were being marked.

Within the letter Volmes' troops establishment was amongst one of it's contents, and it also stated that the one that initiated the village raiding plans to start the conflict between Gazzetta and Fonclanc was Volmes.

The chances that he had created with his hands, the attempts that Volmes had tried to gain a foothold from were all completely exhausted.

"Now the, all value of the informations about Nossentes you had are useless….so what do you have to say now?"

"....."

"...."

Volmes was silent as he pulled back a short breath.

Part 2

Five days had passed after the fall of the Patrucia Nost. The carriage that was supposed to greet the Darkness God Corps' party would not arrive for another few days. Therefore the party was currently relaxing at the port town.

"Oh, you are out shopping?"

"Yeah, i'm in charge of the dinner today. I'll be cooking fish."

"You seem to be happy"

Razshia seemed to be tense, but the peaceful atmosphere around the party had started to get to her and she was being much more natural in her acting. She had even gotten friendly with the members of Yuusuke's corps. However the girl herself had not remembered the last time she felt truly at peace (satisfied)

"Bees"

"Eh?"

That day, Razshia had headed out to shop alone, when her codename was unexpectedly called from behind. Standing in front of the alley was a little girl, giving off an adorable smile while staring at her. The girl was singing a song like those of a fairytale.

"Flowers to flowers, let's go look for sweet honey~"

"....in that body, there is concealed poison."

"Fufufu as I thought you were the bee right?"

"You are….from the special unit?"

The little girl who identified herself as Eru(Elfiona) invited Razshia into an alley while handing her a small wrapped package. Razshia immediately knew that there were poisonous drugs within the package that was handed to her.

Following after the childlike movement of Eru(Elfiona), they advanced into the alley. After a short while they arrived at a place from where they could not hear the noises of the busy street anymore. There, a cold male voice, belonging to a member of Nossentes special ops, called out the name [Honeybee] and began giving her her orders. (Shortened second part, cut out Nossentes secret ops temptress)

"Orders from the divine parliament."

"Tsu!"

~~Neutralize the Darkness God Corps and Fonclanc Ambassadors, assist the work force in their raid.~~

“What do you see?”

“The person herself seems to wanna run away.”

After seeing Razshia’s figure disappear in the bustling crowd, the captain of the unit came out and to obtain the opinion of his subordinate. Noticing her reaction as the order was given, her feeling towards the extension of the mission and the actions that would be made towards the darkness god corps. If her feelings were to set it, it would prove to be troublesome.

“Do you think she will betray us?”

“That woman maybe, she had the same special training as Eru(Elfiona), so there shouldn’t be a betrayal.”

As the subordinate answered, the adorable smiling elementary girl who was standing beside him turned and looked towards a different direction. The newly established by Nossentes intelligence buery, the research training “Child Assassination Squad”. This time Eru(Elfiona) was assigned to the special ops as a prototype child assassin.

The innocent smile, the lovely gestures, everything which is included for a loli, the absolute obedience to the orders from a commander and faithfully doing any given task. An aim emotional training was carried out, thus when they are on standby they are quiet like dolls. They were taught to not do autonomous actions.

Seeing a emotional development on the growing Razshia, the spell of obedience that was implanted and wedged deep in her heart would prevent her from escaping. After listening to the opinion of the subordinate, the captain of the unit nodded in consent.

Razshia had returned to the inn after shopping, she confessed to Rasanasha about the order to attack the Darkness God Corps.

“Chi ah~ah, like I thought it’s impossible to get a normal life at this point!”

“Shia….”

“Have you made up mind on your resolution?”

Tonight, she will not be able to go out for a stroll and would have to come up with her decision after dinner, as Rasanasha persuaded her to rethink about it. Even if the divine parliament is alive and well, Nossentes is currently under Gazzetta occupation and they themselves are traveling towards Fonclanc.

So long as there is a reason to be loyal to their country, their beliefs can be respected. However, the fact Razshia is going to follow the orders were pointed out as anxiety rather than loyalty by Rasanasha.

Like a prickling stabbed with a needle, Razshia frowned and looked away as she turned in silence.

“Ne, please Shia. Give it a second thought, let’s talk to Yuusuke-same about it?”

".....I'm sorry, Rasa."

"! ng…..tsu"

Razshia turned and looked back, behind her was a translucent yellow object that she had prepared, a jelly type honey looking sweet that she placed in her mouth, she immediately stole Rasanasha's lips and pushes the sweet down her throat with her tongue. And at that rate she pushed her and held her down onto the bed.

Rasanasha who understood the meaning of her actions, she tried to swing and twist her body in order to get out and inform Yuusuke and his party about it, but Razshia had received training to constrict someone, thus Rasanasha couldn't break free.

Eventually, Rasanasha fell into a deep slumber as the anesthetic that was in the honey took control.

" I'm really sorry…."

Razshia murmured softly while gently stroking Rasanasha's cheek, she took the package she had gotten from Eru(Elfiona) and concealed it in her bosom as she left the room.

"Ooo~looks delicious."

"It doesn't looks delicious, it is delicious."

"Hahaha I wonder if I can take portion of it."

Like usual everyone gathered for dinner, their eating and chattering created the lively atmosphere. She gave the explanation that Rasanasha is resting early due to her sickness, as it is known that she was suffering from a disease, and everyone was convinced easily, though they were worried about her.

"Well then, I will go nurse my sister."

"Okay, if anything happens, call out to us."

"Shia's cuisines was delicious."

"Ne~Next time…..please teach me about the amount of seasonings."

After returning to her room, Razshia was prepared to go out as she looked at Rasansha who was sleeping on the bed. A slow acting sleeping drug was mixed into the cuisine and everything was eaten without leaving anything behind. Looking at the food made by her, which was on the table that had been cleaned out, made her felt happy during this mission.

However, this time the swirling in Razshia's heart wasn't because of the joy of being praised from the cooking done by her, neither was it because of the sense of achievement due to a successful mission, but because of the fear and impatience that she had felt which could not be put into words.

“.....the report, I have to go….”

Razshia being lost about where to go, she exited to the streets from the back door of the inn as she walked down the alley of the port city bathed in the night sky.

Chapter 55: The fleeting song of the honeybee (Part 3)

A little while before the special operations squad got in touch with Honeybee —

A guard carriage was driving through a small road in a forest, situated north east of Nossentes.

"Is the Gazzetta army still after us?"

"Yes! They are keeping their distance, probably because they are afraid of our counterattack using divine arts. But they have not given up the chase yet."

A few days had already passed since the fall of Patrucia Nost. The Nossentes soldiers that had scattered around the country were already uniting under the Divine Parliament and were on their way to Fonclanc. They were currently traveling towards Blue Garden.

On the way they were spotted by a Gazzetta patrol. However Gazzetta was not regarded well in Blue Garden since their incursion during the battle at Paula. The ministers believed that Gazzetta would cease the chase once they crossed the border.

"Enemies ahead! Affiliation… they are Blue Garden's regular army!"

"They are ordering us to stop!"

"Issue a refugee request. Tell them that we are being pursued by Gazzetta patrol."

However, when the answer from the Blue Garden army arrived, Nossentes' hopes to cross through Blue Garden into Fonclanc were replaced by terror.

"…to sum it up, they are saying that they will attack us if we try to enter their country."

"WHAT?! Is their commander blind or something? Can't he see the situation we're in?!"

Gazzetta was a country ruled by artless. Its king was trying to overthrow the current rulers of the world – the divine arts users. The ministers expected that Blue Garden would sympathize and side with fellow divine arts users. Gazzetta currently controlled practically the entire territory of Nossentes. This dramatically changed the political map of Kaltcio.

Although Blue Garden had shown tremendous growth recently, it was still a ways off from a powerful country and was regarded by the other powers as an emerging nation. Travelling through Gazzetta territory was not an option, as even an amateur would have understood the situation the Nossentian refugees (T.N. used refugees, but should refer to this group) was currently in.

The ministers did not try to hide their irritation, but right now they could not afford to order their troops to attack Blue Garden. So they had to find some other way out before they got completely sandwiched between Nossentes and Blue Garden forces.

Nossentes knights immediately tightened their defenses around the carriage. Blue Garden's troops surrounded them with a semicircle formation. Having finally caught up

to their prey, the Gazzetta troops were unable to understand this standoff.

At first, Nossentes and Blue Garden soldiers glared at each other, with the carriage with the ministers in between the armies. However, after a short while the representatives of both armies met and exchanged a few words. The feeling they gave off seemed that all of this was just a prearranged act.

This guess soon proved to be true.

"Disarm?!"

"Impossible… For Blue Garden to be working together with Gazzetta!"

"I can't believe that…"

"No, how can we know that the Blue Garden army before us is the real one?"

Ministers whispered about attacking both armies and fleeing towards Fonclanc, but finally decided against it because breaking out of the current situation was too difficult. Having arrived at this conclusion they reluctantly accepted shackles from a Blue Garden envoy and surrendered to the Blue Garden commander. They were about to demand treatment, suitable for someone of their standing, but…

"You lot are clearly mistaken."

"…what?!"

Blue Garden's commander flat out rejected their demand and continued in a commanding tone.

"We have come here to capture fugitives, not leaders of a country. You have no rights to negotiate."

"What is the meaning of this?!"

"You are just a commander! Know your place!"

"You are mocking the Divine Parliament of Nossentes! The Queen will receive an official complaint regarding this!"

The commander was attacked verbally by all of the ministers. He had to explain them that order to capture the Divine Parliament was issued directly by the Queen. Hearing this, the ministers were visibly shocked. ["Why, why did the Queen of Blue Garden do this to us?!"], probably every minister frantically tried to think of a reason for this in his or her mind.

"What the hell are you thinking?!"

"I am sure that you had made a secret deal with the Gazzetta's King."

"You are hereby arrested for sending a covert ops force into our territory. We wish you a pleasant journey to Paula. We will be escorting you all the way."

"…?!"

The commander mentioned the covert ops squad that had disguised to resemble Fonclanc troops. This was the same squad that had intercepted Gazzetta troops at the beginning of the artless villages' raids. What shocked the ministers the most was that this was supposed to be top secret information. The ministers did not respond, but their faces became expressionless like they were crafted out of stones.

***

When she received information about a Nossentian covert ops squad operating within Blue Garden's territory, Queen Rishause immediately linked them to the Divine Parliament and speculated that these two groups would attempt to join up. Thus, the Queen had placed her troops at the places she had thought likely to be used by the Divine Parliament to cross into Blue Garden's territory.

She had also passed this report to Reiford, instructing him to bring it to King Esvobus. Rishause had also offered to capture the group that had led Fonclanc's army around. She expected that such an act would serve to lessen the animosity between their countries.

Besides repairing relationships with Fonclanc to some extent, by doing this Rishause would also be able to keep Gazzetta's actions restrained. After familiarizing with the information that he had received from King Shinha, Fonclanc's king immediately ordered his retainers to take appropriate actions.

It was an easy decision for him, because a messenger from King Shinha had arrived before Reifold, moreover, this information confirmed what Volmes had said during his interrogation.

Rishause understood, that both kings acted only to save their reputation. Gazzetta would mobilize their army and restrict the Divine Parliament's movements, while Fonclanc's army would turn the captured ministers over should they manage to reach Fonclanc.

With this plan, Shinha had no way to lose.

"Are they aiming for the Darkness God Corps?"

"It seems so, but they have already concealed themselves within Fonclanc's port town."

When they had captured the ministers, the commander sent some of the knights ahead of the main group. He wanted to inform Fonclanc as soon as possible and obtain an official request to arrest them.

On Gazzetta's side, Shinha ordered to inform Fonclanc of this immediately. He wanted to make Esvobus owe him enough so that he could ask him to recognize the renewed White Clan's empire.

Thus, both countries simultaneously sent their reports to Fonclanc.

When the reports arrived, Fonclanc immediately issued an emergency sortie to support the Darkness God Corps. However, using wind arts in this situation was too risky, so they could not warn Yuusuke's party about it.

When the reports arrived, King Esvobus felt that the time for King Shinha to make his

stand at the frontlines had finally come. From now on he would need to not only keep a close eye on Gazzetta, but he would also need to try to improve his relationship with Blue Garden.

"But will they make it in time to support the Darkness God Corps?"

Esvobus looked towards the Moon Mirror lake from his own private room. Gradually his eyes drifted towards the overwatch tower, where his daughter was probably looking towards the direction of the port town.

***

Yuusuke had endowed his corps uniform with various buffs. Therefore he always felt comfortable despite the circumstances.

He went to sleep early along with everyone, but he awoke before anyone else. It had become his habit to experiment with his customization power until dawn. He did not change it despite reaching the final stretch of his mission.

Today he was working on the medicine that would have strong healing powers able to improve Rashanasha's condition. Using the high quality ingredients that he had managed to obtain in Nossentes, Yuusuke was progressing well on creating the "Super healing potion" (named by Yuusuke).

"I'd love to eat something."

The youth had a quick metabolism so he felt hungry even after staying still for a few hours. When he walked out of his room to get a late night snack, Yuusuke was suddenly overcome by an ominous feeling.

"…today feels quieter than usual."

Ordinary guests were not allowed near the Darkness God Corps' quarters. Empty rooms stretched around him, however the leader was unable to hear Fonke's and Vermeer's voices, nor the friendly conversation between the ambassador's group members.

"They might be considerate of the sisters."

Just when Yuusuke decided on that and was about to go down the corridor towards the kitchen…

"Cap…tai…n"

"?!"

Yuusuke stopped in his tracks after hearing a woman's voice. While he was trying to locate the source of the voice, one of the three doors in the corridor had opened with a creaking sound.

"Cap…tai…n"

"Aisha?!"

Aisha was wearing her pajamas. She was gripping the door and seemed to be barely

able to stand on her feet. The girl's knees were shaking and she looked like she would fall down at any second. Helping her stand, the captain inquired about her health.

"Hey, what happened? Are you okay?!"

"I… I ha… ve been… poisoned…"

"Hey, hold on… Here, sit down… Drink this!"

"Ugh… nnn…"

Aisha was completely pale, her hands and feet were shaking. Yuusuke led his subordinate to a seat and had her drink the trial Super Healing Potion. Instantly, the girl's cheeks regained their natural color, and her limbs settled down completely.

***

"Anesthetic?"

"Yes, it was probably also modified with water arts."

After listening to Aisha's explanation Yuusuke hurried to his room, took several more vials of the same medicine that he had given to Aisha, and went to confirm the condition of the 4-other members of his party.

Aisha started feeling the effects of the poison while she was still lying in bed and reading a book. She immediately started using her healing arts, yet she was unable to cure the numbness that was threatening to overcome her entire body.

In the end, Aisha was completely paralyzed save for the arms that the girl could still somehow use. She then remembered a recovery ring that was lying on the bedside table.

"I must inform the captain about this!" – after equipping the ring a thought flashed in her head. Thus Aisha put her utmost effort to get out of the room.

"I am leaving the room on that side to you!"

"Yes!"

Giving Aisha enough potions to cure everyone on her side, Yuusuke split up to his side of the corridor. After checking all of the rooms, they found out that, including the ambassador, everyone was incapacitated similarly to Aisha.

"This is Isotta's room, right? Isotta! Are you okay?!"

"C…ca…captain…"

Yuusuke hesitated to enter a female subordinates' room alone, but hearing Isotta's pleading voice he finally decided to enter the room without waiting for Aisha.

Isotta laid collapsed in front of the bed. It looked like she was preparing to go to sleep, but her body gave out before she could make it.

Yuusuke rushed to the collapsed girl. Breathing a sigh of relief when he confirmed that

Isotta did not get any serious injuries, Yuusuke placed a bottle near the girl's lips.

"Drink this. It will make you feel better."

"Th..ank…you"

In the meantime, Yuusuke's eyes got used to the darkness of the room. He inevitably noticed the light sleeping gown that barely covered the girl's features. Yuusuke then envisioned himself holding Isotta in his hands like a baby that was being fed the super recovery potion and his face reddened from embarrassment.

When every member of the corps was cured, they gathered in Yuusuke's room to confirm their present situation. Just around the time that poison started to take its effect, Isotta had received an urgent transmission from Sanc Adiet. She now told the other members of what little she managed to remember of it. (T.N. she did not remember all of it because of the poison)

"The Darkness God Corps are the target this time…" (Yuusuke)

"Certainly, this time the attack was targeted at us." (Aisha)

"You think it's because of the numbing poison being used on us?" (Yuusuke)

"Uhm, it's the first time I had experienced a drug with such an effect and effectiveness, but I think that the poison's effect was delayed." (Aisha)

Fonke and Isotta confirmed that there were no traces of a wind art being used to make everyone inhale the drug. Then the gathered members tried to make out the moment of when the poison started to take effect. One by one they spoke on when they started feeling the poison's effects and what they were doing at the time.

"I didn't eat anything when I returned to my room." (Vermeer)

"Me neither. I only drank some alcohol that I bought before." (Fonke)

"Same with us. We collapsed around the time when we were talking about going out for a drink." (Ambassador's party?)

"So, no one ate anything else after dinner…"

The inn's cook and Razshia were responsible for tonight's meal.

"Razshia is not here?"

"Yes, I – Rashanasha-san was sleeping in her bed, but…"

***

Covert ops were able to intercept the urgent transmission from Fonclanc, but they failed to completely block it. Although Nossentes' squad did not understand the fine details, it was clear that an escort from Sanc Adiet was on its way. In response, the covert ops squad had to hurriedly change their plan.

At first, they planned to attack the harbor guards and prevent them from interfering, but being pressed for time they decided to directly attack the Darkness God Corps.

"Is the medicine still working?"

"Don't worry, it's custom made for this occasion."

"The target will be unable to move until morning [If they did not mess up]," added one of the subordinates, glancing over his back towards the Temptress (Honeybee) and the Child Assassin (Elfiona).

Razshia, who came here to report the completion of her mission, was obviously uncomfortable. She definitely thought of fleeing when the capital fell. Moreover, her feelings for her target were also obvious.

Since she had let her feelings get in her way, the commander of the covert ops wanted to punish her so she would never think of acting like that again. However, when the headquarters were lost to the enemy, there was no adequate facility left that could properly retrain Honeybee.

["We will properly retrain her after this mission…"]

Just like that, commander of the covert ops decided that Honeybee would serve as a fine example to other troops.

***

Several lights could still be seen flickering inside the inn when the secret ops had invaded the building from the rear exit.

Their plan was to move to Yuusuke's party's lodgings. The intruders knew that their quarters were separated, so they would be able to swiftly and stealthily carry out the assassination. Afterwards they were to create an uproar, waking inn's staff and guests and make a scene before them and any curious onlookers. The assassins would look like retreating Gazzetta troops to anyone who saw them.

"Up here. You go to the right, the two of you – to the left. Everyone else go to the ambassador's quarters."

The lot was approaching the central stairway that led to the second floor where the Fonclanc's party should have been helplessly awaiting their deaths.

"Hey!"

"Wh-what is it?!"

"The floor… ?!"

The vanguard of the group suddenly disappeared in a hole that suddenly opened below him. Suddenly the floor tilted and everyone else who followed behind the first guy, unable to hold their footing, fell after him. This was supposed to be an ordinary inn. When the Nossentes forces checked out the building beforehand, there were no such devices installed in it.

"It… it's an ambush! We have been had, retreat immediately!"

The captain of the invaders instantly realized that this trap was prepared by the captain

of the Darkness God Corps. After all the rumor of him being able to freely control everything around him was indeed true. The captain turned towards the Honeybee, who was following behind him and slashed her without any warning.

"Eeeek!"

"So you're going to double cross us, eh?"

After tearing through her clothes, the attacker stopped his blade. Unconsciously trying to evade the slash, Razshia fell on her butt. She was so surprised by this that she could only look at her captain in shock.

"W-why…?"

"Did you forget that traitors are punished by death?"

"…That's a mistake… why am I… a traitor?"

"Shut up! It's useless to try to talk your way out of it."

The assassin raised his black knife and pointed it towards the girl. Razshia was not trained to take lives, so she could only tremble at the assassin captain's bloodlust.

She frantically tried to back off from the danger, but the captain closed the distance in a single step.

"I suppose, I shall present your body to your beloved Darkness God Corps."

"N-Noooo!"

"Too bad, I prefer living girls over the dead ones."

A young man's voice tore through the intense mood, and the assassin's captain turned towards the voice.

"!!"

Commander knew the man that was pointing at him. Although their positions had been reversed, he decided to take the chance and ordered the attack.

The instant he tried to move, his legs had hit something like an invisible rope. The assassin commander lost his balance and fell down on all fours. He was frantically searching for the device or traces of a divine art that were used to create the trap, but…

"What?!"

The world once again spun around him. This time he was unable to react to it and he fell down on his back. The next instant his face was approaching the floor. He immediately stretched out his limbs to lessen the shock and somehow managed to land on his knee… or he thought so – the next moment he felt like he was floating in the air. This time he was rapidly approaching the inn's ceiling. He hit the ceiling with his back and then fell down on the floor once more.

["What the heck is this? What is happening here?! What the hell did I touch?"]

Razshia was dumbfounded as she was looking at the scene before her. Members of the Darkness God Corps, who stood beside their captain at the top of the stairs, ambassador, and the trapped assassins – everyone had ingrained this terrible sight into their minds.

Whenever the captain thought that he had hit the ground, he was launched again towards the ceiling, and back to the floor, once he hit that.

The trap itself was pretty simple. Yuusuke had replaced the boards, covering the floor and the ceiling, with customized thus creating an Endless Fall Trap (named by Yuusuke). "Bam bam bam," the sound of the person repeatedly hitting the ceiling and the floor continued to resound in the building.

Although this went on for only a few minutes, for spectators it seemed that a few hours had already passed.

The captain of the Nossentes troop leader soon lost his consciousness from all that endless falling. Feeling that they had had enough, his underlings also gave up their weapons. Just when everyone else finished rounding the surrendered forces up, a new voice echoed in the hall.

"Are you safe, Yuusuke?!"

The carriage from Sanc Adiet finally arrived, rushing through the gate into the town. The arrived soldiers looked really worn out and seemed to be standing on their will alone.

"Hey Hivodir, how are you?"

"… you really look safe…"

Hivodir was leading the Sanc Adiet's support. He became highly regarded amongst the palace commanders after the earlier incident in this town. The commander saw this support mission as an easy way to make the Darkness God Corps feel indebted to him, and the higher ups easily consented to the fire art's user volunteering to take command.

In the past, Hivodir would have never done something like that. Even more so he would be displeased if he was ordered to go on a forced march like this.

"Now now, don't be sulking here on me."

"I-I'm not sulking!"

Everyone eased at the sight of Yuusuke bickering with the leader of the special support force and the usual atmosphere had returned to the room. The recent events – the Divine Parliament and the following conspiracy of the remnants of Nossentes army – constantly held everyone on edge.

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"Are you unhurt?"

"Ah…"

Yuusuke squatted before the still sitting Razshia and offered his hand.

"I… I…"

"No need to talk now… I will hear you out later, it would be best for you to get some rest right now."

He was sure that this woman was responsible for poisoning their food. The assassin captain's words left no doubt that Razshia was one of Nossentes' spies.

Although there was also a question of how much did Rashanasha know about her sister's affiliation, Yuusuke decided to leave these questions for when he safely got his party back to Sanc Adiet.

"Shia!"

At that time Rashanasha, having fully recovered from the poison, rushed to her sister. Everyone focused their attention to her voice and failed to notice a small shadow that silently slipped into the room. Everyyone, except for Razshia, who was sitting on the floor.

She knew that little girl, who went by the codename [Poison Wasp] that put a thin, straw-like tube to her mouth.

"Yuusuke!"

Razshia knew what the wasp's intention was and jumped at Yuusuke. She covered Yuusuke with her body, but that made Elfiona's special dart (stinger) hit her instead of the one that had saved her.

"Wha?!"

"SHIA!"

Having missed her target and exposed her location in a crowded room, Elfiona was quickly apprehended by the knight.

"Hey, Razshia? What happened to you?"

"Ah… Guh! WAAAAAH!"

"It looks bad. Someone hold her down, we need to take the dart out quickly!"

Shaheed noticed the dart on Razshhia's chest and called out the orders in an unusually commanding voice. Rashanasha and Aisha, both being healing type water arts users, rushed to the girl and tried to heal her.

"Shia! Shia! Hold on!"

"What kind of dart is this?! What do we do?!"

Somehow they were unable to pull the dart out. On the contrary, the dart was steadily getting deeper into the girl's body.

"Hahahha, you cannot take this dart out. It has a special stinger on its tip. Once it hits

you, there's nothing that you can do. " explained the assassin captain in a triumphant voice. Although he had failed to kill the captain of the Darkness God Corps, he had managed to take out the one that betrayed him and got his revenge on Yuusuke. Thus he had shown a sadistic smile on his face.

The poison within the dart caused the muscles around it to spasm thus making the dart dig further into its target's body. It was made to release a second deadly poison once more than half of the dart had entered the body. The poison itself caused the body to rot, thus making the victim experience hellish pain before their death.

The dart was impossible to pull out, but it was made in a way that if one tried to break it, the dart would immediately spread its poison.

"This is your reward for betraying us. Die in as much pain GAH!"

"Shut the fuck up, you son of a bitch!"

Fonke knocked the smile off the assassins face.

"Disgusting piece of trash," spat out the guy while shaking his hand.

Aisha and Rashanasha desperately continued using their divine arts, yet the dart, unrelenting, continued to go on its deadly way. The skin around the dart started turning purple. Razshia was already exhausted from the struggle and had stopped moving.

Despair had started to spread around the room when Yuusuke dashed down from the stairs – he had ran to his room to get more of the customized medicine.

"Captain! If it continues like this…"

"I know!"

Grasping the dart with one of his hands, Yuusuke took Razshia's arm with his remaining hand.

"It's … too … late …"

"I am not letting you die!"

Knowing that the potion alone will not save Razshia, Yuusuke had also customized the dart and removed the part that caused itto sink into the body, easily pulled it out, and safely wrapped it in a piece of cloth.

A look of confusion sprang on the assassin's captain's face, but Yuusuke ignored him and proceeded to feed the medicine to the girl.

"I did not have time to test it, but I believe that it will somehow work."

After all, the purchased medicine was only the base for the Super Healing Potion. This potion was not only effective when drank, it also seeped into the skin if applied externally and increased the effectiveness of healing arts, used on the area. Moreover, it acted as a healing art itself!

The purple patch of skin quickly regained it's lustrous, healthy color and Razshia's pale

face had regained its warmth. Although the poison was already gone from her body, the girl was still severely exhausted and had passed out.

“Phew… She will be alright now. Thanks, you two.”

“Thank god… As expected of you, Captain, you performed an impossible feat yet again.”

“Yuusuke-sama…”

The two girls were thanking Yuusuke while gently stroking the sleeping girls’ hair.

“Let us all go and get some rest now.”

Chapter 56: Aftermath

The series of events that started with the artless village raids incident had ended with the fall of Nossentes.

The Darkness God Corps and Ambassador's party were riding to Sanc Adiet in the carriage that had been sent out to greet them.

The soldiers followed slightly behind them, escorting the prisoners of war. Rashanasha, Razshia and Elfiona were riding together in a separate carriage surrounded by guards that were both protecting and keeping an eye on them.

After the attack on the inn, Yuusuke carried Razshia to her room and cleared out the remaining traps in the inn. When he reached the point where he could take a break, he sat down for a serious talk with Rashanasha.

"For the sake of everyone here, you have to tell me everything—"

Rashanasha had told him everything and had bowed her head in apology to everyone in the room.

***

"It really feels strange returning to San Adiet like that…"

"It sure does… especially considering everything that happened to us."

Rashanasha had confessed everything about her relationship with the palace officials and of her status as a Singing Princess being just a cover up for being a spy for Nossentes. Hivodir had told everyone about a great number of palace officials that were working for the Divine Parliament, so everyone calmly accepted the woman's confession.

Still, the situation was serious. Although due to King Esvobus' character, the palace would probably avoid the purge, no one expected that the spies would still be allowed to get away like that.

"I think that there will be a huge personnel shift soon."

"I think that there will be a slight commotion, but we will be able to leisurely observe it from the side."

Fonke and Isotta nodded, agreeing to what Yuusuke told them in a calm voice while Aisha and Vermeer only shrugged their shoulder at their captain. Vermeer alone did not explicitly show anything, yet he also looked to be at ease.

Yuusuke's party had successfully accomplished their mission and returned to Sanc Adiet on the seventeenth day of Shalnar's month of Water.

"Glad to see you back safely, Yuusuke. Everyone was worried about you."

"Welcome back, Yuusuke-san. Welcome back everyone."

"I'm back. Somehow, seeing you girls really puts my heart at ease."

A major power with a long and rich history had fallen during ambassador's friendship visit, thus Sanc Adiet restrained themselves from greeting the ambassador with a flashy welcome. Yuusuke, who still had to address Rashanasha's situation, gladly agreed to this.

Thus, after being quietly greeted by Sun and Violet, the party proceeded to inform them about the successful accomplishment of their mission.

"Weeell, should I visit a woman's place for once?"

"Today we only need to give in the report, so go ahead— hey, you're acting improperly in front of a princess!"

Vermeer warned Fonke for acting a bit vulgar, when he was about to leave to visit a nightsinger. Noticing Aisha glaring at him in disgust he apologized, but Violet, not used to the jargon used by common soldiers, did not particularly mind that.

["Just because she doesn't understand it doesn't mean it's ok to speak like that."]

Yuusuke saw his subordinates off, who were departing to their own rooms and various districts of the city. When he was about to return to his own room as well, Yuusuke suddenly remembered something and ran out after one of them.

"Yuusuke-san?"

"Hm? Yuusuke, where are you running off to?" asked Violet when they were walking towards Yuusuke's room.

"I just forgot to finish something"

Violet wanted to talk to Yuusuke about Sorzak's advances in Gimmick Motor research and possible applications of that invention. She could only watch, confused, as Yuusuke ran off somewhere.

"Shaheed!"

"Captain? Do you need something from me?"

"No… or rather… regarding the inn at the port town, I wanted to talk about what I should do from on… Why the worried face, is something wrong?"

"Ah… about that?"

Yuusuke worried about the expression that Shaheed had shown at the inn, was his plan faulty? He wanted to ask Shaheed about that as soon as he could find his subordinate alone, without any onlookers.

"This incident did not feel any different from others, it felt that like it was someone else's problem. Regarding the future, the Darkness God Corps and you, Captain, have both become quite close to her highness thus I believe that you will have a lot of influence on the future of this country. Looking at the situation from the Evil God's perspective, I don't know enough about it, but so far no one could stand up against it.

Both, Gazzetta and Nossentes tried to lure you over to their side. Gazzetta had declared themselves to be your allies and has stepped up as a new major power, while Nossentes' Divine Parliament had sent assassins after you and their long and rich history has come to an end. A huge country with five to six thousands of years of history has perished almost overnight." answered Shaheed.

"With great power and achievements, you also gain connections and influence, yet you are not trying to use them to your advantage."

"Regarding the Evil God… I did not deserve any of them, it was pure luck."

"Those born with strength, those that have acquired it, I think the responsibilities that they are burdened with do not change merely from this. If you have the strength to achieve something, but choose not to because of certain circumstances, you can say that you did so because of responsibility. Yet if you choose to avoid if because you are not interested, this will be called an abandonment of your duties. Strength used for a reason, and strength used for the sake of using it. I believe that no person, born with great strength, can be forced to use it in a just way," continued Shaheed.

"Would you wish to see me become a bureaucrat, Shaheed?"

"I'd rather see you becoming a ruler."

"… isn't is dangerous to be thinking like that?"

"It is only my personal opinion," Shaheed replied to Yuusuke's earnest question with a sheepish smile.

***

The third day after the return of the Darkness God Corps.

Cleaning of Nossentes collaborators had been continuing since the return of Yuusuke's party. The punishment and replacement for the convicted officials had been decided in advance so the officials, responsible for dealing out punishments, had their hands full the entire time.

Volmes was punished with death by execution, the two severely wounded fire troupe members were punished with forced labor – assigned to the artless city cleaning duties. Rashanasha's boss, the so called Count, was executed one day before Volmes.

"Still, so many punishments in such a short term, this is the first time you have done that, father."

"An ancient country has just perished, our neighbors will take this as their chance to increase their influence."

(T.N. these two dialogs are separated)

"To be honest, that's a scary power."

"You are telling me that…? Compared to Shinha who now rules over Nossentes and Gazzetta, my power is nothing much," replied Yuusuke.

Truly speaking, if those that tried to make an enemy out of the Evil God continued to disappear like that, people would start thinking that this was Yuusuke's real power.

"What I said when I first met you might not have been wrong after all ahahahaha," Violet shrugged her shoulders. (T.N. probably a reference to "Are you the God of calamity…? Have you come to destroy my country?")

"Oh you little!"

While everyone in the palace was busy dealing with the fallout, Yuusuke put his Gimmick development aside in favor of researching the medicine. Unhappy that her contraption, that was an imitation of a go-cart, was being delayed, Violet came to hang out at Yuusuke's room.

"So? The bureaucrats have gathered today again but have not disposed of anyone yet?"

"They are in the middle of the discussion—"

Meddling into Yusuke's medicine research, Violet was talking to Krielov who visited the room because of the matters related to the Nossentes incident.

Although it was distracting, Violet also had allowed Yuusuke to take short breaks once in awhile. Having heard Krielov's voice, the youth stopped his work.

"Has the punishment for the girls been decided on?"

"Hmm… the Singing Princess, the spy girl that you brought back, and that stone faced child?"

According to the Nossentes' officials and the members of the disbanded covert ops squad, these girls were specially selected as the most talented individuals for their jobs. Just because of their abilities alone, these three girls meant trouble.

This means that they had betrayed the country that they were being supported by. Such a deed would usually be met with the harshest punishment, but Yuusuke pleaded for them to receive the lightest possible sentence – public beating.

"Well, considering the officials, that's a reasonable decision" (Krielov)

"Yeah, but… the execution of the punishment…" (Violet)

While Violet consented to Yuusuke's feelings, Krielov explained that this was the most lenient punishment that would still serve as an example to other people. Although he said that, he could not shake the dislike that he also felt towards the decision.

"So what is the punishment like?" (Yuusuke)

"Exactly as it sounds. They will be publicly lashed." (Krielov)

In the plaza that was used for punishments, on a raised platform the three girls stood on all fours, clad in shackles. Their lower body was exposed. The punishment was especially shameful as they were being exposed in the middle of the day with the executioner hitting their butts before a large crowd.

Even if the girls were being used as an example, this was still a displeasing sight. The executioner had hit them in the backs so they would reveal themselves as much as possible in front of the crowd while repeatedly beating them down.

Until the punishment was given, the prisoners were taken care by the executioner. This particular guy had a bad hobby of making his victims drink a lot of water before the execution, hoping that the victims would not be able to hold themselves for the entire duration of the punishment.

It was said that noble girls were usually so shy that most of them would pass out while being hit. There were some that even tried biting off their tongues in an attempt to kill themselves, so the prisoners were gagged to prevent them from attempted suicides.

After punishment they were forced to go on a walk of shame through the city with their faces exposed for everyone to see. For Rashanasha, this meant losing her status of a Singing Princess, for other girls, this destroyed their reputation no matter the skills that they were well versed in. That was actually one of the key intentions behind the decision.

It was said the punishment did not scar the body nor was it painful, but Violet was more worried about the scars that it left on the victims' hearts. However, after the executions, such a disgracing punishment did not seem that harsh anymore. The count, that had used the girls, had already received the worst of it.

"Hmmm, so you have such punishments too…"

"I said so, didn't I? Such punishments were not practiced during my father's reign. What we see here is actually a very old practice."

During the reign of the previous king, and the king before him, the court woman were living on the edge of the blade. If they found themselves part of some conspiracy or were reported by someone for "indecent behavior within the castle," this was the punishment that was usually given to them.

The punishments were given readily – as much as a rumor of a concubine or a servant girl accidently stumbling upon the prosecuted at a wrong time was all that it took to be punished. King Esvobus did not have any concubines, some even said that no one ever saw the king bring concubines into the palace at all when he was young.

"Considering the officials, I can assume that it was the truth. Krielov, don't you think that this guy is trying to keep Rashanasha for himself?" (Violet about Yuusuke)

"It can't be, it sounds too good to be true…" (Krielov)

"But I wonder if that really was a punishment for them…" (Yuusuke)

After asking a few questions about the Rashanasha's punishment, Yuusuke suddenly said:

"Then I will be the executioner." (Yuusuke)

"W-what?!" (Violet)

Chapter 57: The Tie up and many problems

"Eru~, if you are going back to teacher's place take this along."

"Ng…."

Stretching out with both of her hands Eru (Elfiona) received a basket filled with vegetables, sfx: tote tote, as the green haired little girl walks along. Bahana smiles as it looks as if the child version of Sun had came back as she sees off the small little back.

Just earlier this week, Yuusuke brought a potion along with Rasanasha and the child assassin Eru (Elfiona). As a form of protection against the dismantled special ops, Yuusuke brought her into Zeshald's custody.

Eru (Elfiona) spends her time at Zeshald's house with almost no emotions, very much like an adult. After washing and shelving away the vegetables she brought back, she brewed tea with the method taught to her by Beluysha.

Time to time, there were whisperings about the 2 of them looking like parent and child and sometimes sisters. Part of it was maybe due to the sympathy between each other as fellow assassins. Although she was trained to use adorable gestures and facial expressions, Eru (Elfiona) had a somewhat awkward atmosphere, and her eyes shined filled with curiosity.

Incidentally, the clothes Eru (Elfiona) was wearing was Sun's hand me downs from Bahana.

Sitting on the sofa in the hall and drinking tea, Zeshald was keeping a watch on the 2 of them while thinking about the special potion that was stored on the shelf in his room and remembering about the event that had happened the other day.

By using the potion and Zeshald's healing, the tumor which undermined Rasanasha's body had completely disappeared.

Having been released from the illness which had pestered her her entire life, Rasanasha was dumbfounded by the result, and was grateful to Yuusuke and Zeshald from the bottom of her heart. And one of the incurable diseases at that moment in Kalticio was destroyed.

"With this, many people would be saved but will it be good….."

The purification method of the medicine(potion) that Nossentes had a monopoly on is now under Gazzetta's holding. How many markets does it flow through to be circulated to the different countries' doctors, the materials for the potion and the process of making the support drug (Medical adjuvant) like one would expect, does not appear on the market.

"Rude"

"Umm"

"....."

After receiving chagashi*, the 3 of them were quietly sipping their tea, around this time, Rasanasha's sentence would be carried out in the judgment square.

(* TL notes : It's a kind of japanese tea cakes : go google it, dammed it now I am hungry for some)

"Eventually, Yuusuke will head over to Gazzetta, or…… Well in the end, it would be good if he is doing well."

It is really rare under the reign of King Esvobus, the public shaming of a singing princess, Rasanasha was standing next to Yuusuke on the sentence stage, while looking down shyly. Her mouth was gagged with a piece of cloth.

"Well, let's begin….shall we?"

"Yes…"

The soldiers in charge of Rasanasha headed over to the sentence table. Perhaps it was the charisma of a singing princess, as the treatment for a sinner seemed to be courteous. After confirming the state of the shackles and that the preparations were all ready, Yuusuke who was the enforcement party was told to get down from the sentencing stage, thus the charges for the punishment were then read aloud.

Her ass protruding out as she got on all fours as Rasanasha's skirt got caught onto Yuusuke's hands at that point of time~~

"Oi What's up!"

"I can't see"

Walls of light appeared around the sentencing stage. A dome like wall enclosed the stage, as the dancing small light grains disappeared a wall of stone took their place. It was obvious whose work it was. The entire square was filled with voices of dissatisfaction mixed with a buzz of confusion. However, the voices had immediately subsided.

SFX: Bachin

"Kyaaan!"

And that was the sound and voice which echoed from the other side of the wall, it stirs their imaginations as they couldn't see it. Unable to see the beautiful appearance of Rasanasha in a standing slurry, the onlookers believed in the perverted figure that was on the stage letting out involuntary screams with her lovely voice as they listened to it attentively.

The voices of discontent which became gradual, had in one gulp subsided.

Normally, whenever there is a sentence(punishment) of this kind, there would always be a gala of mocking and jeering, instead there were hoots of "quiet down!" and glaring around, the people who had gathered for the purpose of seeing, had come to tone down in order to listen to noises emanating from the strange situation. It was truly a strange

sight to behold.

The voice and sounds echoed vividly within the walls, as the walls seemed fairly thin, there were those who attempted to pry open a hole. As Yuusuke did not ban anyone from doing so, the soldiers that were onsite tolerated with it, the walls were actually created to be as hard as the anti-divine arts defence walls made during the Gear Hawk fortress incident.

Even the Blue Garden's elite with high powered wind arts could only make scratches on the surface and even their attacks were bounced off the robust thin wall, so what could the general public of the city, whom uses earth arts, do to it.

Though Sorzak thought of drilling through, he was in doubt, and soon gave up the idea of doing so.

In the end, the punishment was completely visually sealed, so Yuusuke took advantage of the fact that there were sounds and voices, and thus "the punishment was enforced". A foul like fraud way of doing things, in the first place there wasn't much contact between a singing princess and the general public, neither was she emotionally attached to those in power enough to affect the country's dignity.

The exhibition was almost like a time specific event, the wall came down the same time as the punishment was done, the restrained and feeble state of Rasanasha who was breathing heavily, felt like "The Singing Princess is clad in seductiveness", to the general public this was a rare view that wouldn't appear in their entire lifetime, thus the onlookers were generally satisfied.

After the event at the square, the young men headed to the brothel one after another.

Whether the caning on the ass occurred or not, only the 2 of them knew.

"Well as expected of a singing princess, everyone seems to have felt it."

"This is embarrassing."

Within the carriage that was withdrawing from the judgement square, Yuusuke was admiring the serious acting of Rasanasha. Specific acting like gasping and suffering, as it felt like it was real. To tell the truth there wasn't a gag in her mouth.

"It seems like I was brought into something perverted."

"Ara, I don't seem to mind…"

He understood that it was a joke, but the way that the Singing Princess glanced at him left him no choice but to swindle his laughter as he continued scratching his head.

On the way to the palace to report on the punishment, Yuusuke went back to his house to pick up Sun and Razshia in his carriage. Sun was heading there to meet up with Violet, while Razshia will be going to Yuusuke's room to help sort out the drug chemicals.

"I, I am going to the palace? Anyways, am I allowed in?"

“Of course, right? Yuusuke-san.”

“Yup”

Razshia had once engaged in activities that directly harmed Fonclanc, as this is the first time of regarding such a matter, it was determined that considering the situation she was in, she had no choice but to obey the orders of the special god corps.

Up until then, her plan was to stay hidden in Fonclanc based on the circumstances, thus her disposal was left to her so called target, the Darkness God Captain’s discretion.

Although Yuusuke said leave it to me, he couldn’t release her officially. Thus the duty of punishment was entrusted to Yuusuke. Although on the surface it serves as a representation of mending relations, the former operative who lost her home country and became a P.O.W should not have fallen under the consideration of human rights.

In short, to be given to Yuusuke as a slave, to stew, to be eaten, or to be whatever he wants her to be, “left under his discretion”. Razshia was wearing a black bracelet as a testament of being a slave to Yuusuke, “A possession of Yuusuke” this is for her own safety.

Since it was found out that Razshia had unexpected knowledge of medicine, Yuusuke expressed interest into bringing her back to his mansion as a pharmaceutical assistant. As this idea would bring about contributions to Fonclanc, thus for appearance’s sake they agreed on discharging her.

“Hey, did you really hit her ass?”

“Hitting is it….?”

“.....you were hit?”

“If you understand don’t ask.”

「分かってて聞くなっ」

In a certain room within the palace, the Darkness god corps, Violet, the 3 ambassadors, and Hivodir with his group of soldiers were having a gathering, it was a modest return party for those who were involved in the turmoil this time.

Everyone were served with a dish made from the thigh meat of a bird, a production of Rufk. Just the other day, when Yuusuke went to drop the healing potion for Rasanasha and Eru off, Bahana had gave him some high quality thigh meat. It was understood that the moment it was tenderized before cooking, the meat would be soft and deliciously popular.

Each individual was indulging in the food and intoxicated by the sake while chatting along, when a trouble faced Krielov voiced out to Yuusuke.

“The healing potions, like I thought without the adjuvants it can’t be made can it?”

“As one would expect, that adjuvant felt special, to find a substitute drug for it might be difficult.”

Seen on the customization screen, the medicine adjuvant status were made out of valuable heavy metal which was the same ones used to create Shinha's large platinum sword and the fake sacred relic. Incidentally, through 'the Fonke experiment' the recovery potion that were made through the analyzation of the water arts were nearly as effective thus they are being mass-produced.

"Furthermore think about the effect of it if we were to sell this on the open market, imitations of the item would be a problem."

"Ah~, items are only items."

As the recovery potions have effects similar to the healing from water arts, it became a standard item for the soldiers. If they were to sell it on the market to adventurers and those who were in the magical beast extermination occupation, it is expected that it will pull in a decent amount of revenue.

Especially, due to the shortage of water arts users and trading with Blue Garden, this will probably become popular.

"But, useful items like recovery potions in the first place are highly valuable, to say that is…"

"....Gazzetta, Shinha is it?"

The valuable purification techniques that Nossentes had was currently held by Gazzetta, the purification method of the healing adjuvants are also there.

"Inevitably, it will come down to a deal."

"It will be so."

Since Gazzetta's army is a physical type warrior system, they would probably want to get all the recovery potion that they need, as Yuusuke agreed.

"Hey you fellas, stop talking with a serious face, it's a place of celebration!"(Violet)

"Yuusuke, is this sweet?"

"Each basket should have one of it."

「籠ごと持ってくんなっ 一個づつにしろ」(TL notes: this is weird >.>)

"Princess-sama, please stop brandishing the thigh meat with both hands it's disgraceful."

After the long talk with serious expression, Yuusuke and Kreilov were attacked by Violet and Razshia. For some reasons, those two seem to have hit off well.

When she was first brought over to Yuusuke's mansion, Razshia was in low spirits, while wondering "will I be able to have peace of mind in this hopeless situation?" and having a sense of cautiousness, but after seeing Sun, who was an Artless living in the noble district like a normal resident, her perception changed.

Maybe she might be forced to sleep with him, as she was even given her own room, but

after talking to Sun about the current state of things with Yuusuke, she re-recognized and came to the resolution to "believe in him". From then on, the original form of a lively and bright girl could be seen on her face.

Even showing a spoiled side which surprised Yuusuke.

"Hey, Rasa so what are you going to do from now on?"

Razshia called out to the nearby table where Rasanasha was surrounded by a group of males. After the punishment, her job as "Singing Princess" could no longer be continued, though there is still a demand for singing in the city thus being a premium singer would be more than enough.

But, by chance if she were to get back into the business, between listening to a green hair wind arts playboy and a yellow hair gentleman wearing old fashioned clothes, Rasanasha

However, being asked by a green hair wind arts playboy and watched at by a yellow haired gentleman wearing old fashioned clothes, Rashanasha was slightly shy to admit that she was going to take this chance and quit her job. Finally she gathered her courage and said it.

Since her disease that had plagued her whole life was cured, Rasanasha wanted to swear her allegiance to Yuusuke.

"I, would like to dedicate my song to Yuusuke."

"Ng?"

You called? Yuusuke looks over from the table next door. After some time~~

"Ehehehehehehehe~~!"

Something like a chorus, began to resounded in the party venue of the Darkness God Corps and the ambassador.

"What, What?"

Everyone raised a voice of surprise, Yuusuke was the only person who didn't understand the meaning of what Rasanasha said, was being restless with what was happening.

The song, aka "song of dedication", in a sense to give everything including your life to the other party, in this case, Rasanasha had declared herself to become Yuusuke's concubine. Whether Yuusuke had accepted it or not is another thing, but.

"That, that….singing princess has dropped the bomb."

"Doing what she wants, wow!"

Yuusuke began respecting Fonke's seriousness.

"Yuusuke-san, could I have some of your time?"

“Eh? Eh?”

After that, Yuusuke was seen being dragged away somewhere by the most quiet girl in the venue.

Chapter 58: Disturbing Signs

In a small relay town southeast of Fonclanc. On the west is the moon mirror lake, while being surrounded by woods. Close to the border of Trent Rietta, along the lake, a little south of the highway one could enter the territory of Trent Rietta.

If one were to follow the road which heads towards the Northeast, they would reach a relay town in Trent Rietta which continues on to the capital "Rinvar". Although the relay town was small, there were a relatively large number of trading associations composed of merchant guild branches.

Recently within the trade association, there have been a number of damage reports caused by magical beasts in the vicinity of the town. Nevertheless, since the destruction of Nossentes the trade route was destroyed, thus they were waiting for Gazzetta's negotiations before reconstructing it.

As the trade association had suffered a blow from lost revenue, beside requesting for a deployment of soldiers from the capital, Sanc Adiet, they also had the adventurers advancing in their own investigation, in order to meet with the merchants demand for rapid response.

"It's about time, that tree with a cloth is the landmark."

"Will we really encounter a magical beast?"

"On the Fonclanc's territorial highway, it is common sense that one must be careful of bandits rather than magical beasts."

"But it would have had entered Trent Rietta's territory through this area right?"

"This country just have too much forest, wouldn't it be hard for anti-magical beast measures?"

This group of 5 adventurers were hired to survey the vicinity, their carriage had stopped in a location slightly beyond the border of Trent Rietta and they were preparing to enter the forest. As they were checking over their equipments, they seem to have begun commenting on the recovery potions which have been recently marketed in Sanc Adiet.

"So this is Fonclanc's recovery potions."

"I was told by the seller, that it was manufactured by using the old Nossentes purification technique by Fonclanc's pharmacist."

"Seems like it's pretty stocked up."

In order to process the full healing potion, he would require the healing adjuvants that are being held by Gazzetta. As it seems that the Artless country was lacking the manpower able to do the purification technique, the number of adjuvants available have plummeted on the market.

After gathering the information, the recovery potions are distributed among the members.

“Is this thing useful?”

“It doesn’t feel bad, it seems to be 20% to 30% more effective than the one sold by Nossentes.”

“Heh, and yet it is half the price…not bad right?”

“Well, as long as we have a water arts member, there isn’t a use for it.”

It’s simply for emergency use, a low cost recovery potion that one could place in a pocket for quick use. Since the preparations were all ready, after dividing the ranks and roles accordingly, they began delving into the woods.

“I don’t think there is, if we were to find the nest we would annihilate it as usual.”

“If all the sightings were correct, there shouldn’t be anything unusual.”

“Let’s just perform the listed work in the contract. Quickly finish up and go to the moon mirror lake to look for treasures.”

As they advance slowly into the forest, they carried out a search operation using wind arts. While observing the movements of animals that were lurking around, they examined the surrounding area for any unnatural presence or suspicious locations.

“Tsu….! They’re here, and it’s 3 response, nearby.”

“Why are these 3 animals gathered at a place like this….?”

“Like I expected they had come from this sea of forest.”

“Be careful, there might be a nest hole nearby.”

In order to confirm the presences of the magical beast in the narrow enclosure, the adventurers proceeded with caution while being alert. The magical beast should have noticed the wind arts being used for a search operation, but it did not show any signs of moving from the location.

As they approached the location of the presence, a strange presence was mixed in it.

“.....? Oi, do you not feel a strange presence?”

“Yeah, I wonder what...is it.”

“It feels a little dangerous, better safe than sorry, let’s head back for now.”

It felt like an artificially made wind arts transmission disruptor from a very strong divine arts presence, as the area surrounding them began to reverberate. The adventurers on site who felt disturb by the phenomenon began hurrying towards the camp near the highway they came from.

Volance Palace, A room in the upper floors ~~

Yuusuke and Violet, who were in the usual room, began discussing Sun's situation, Kreilov was also there giving his opinion.

"At the peak of the party, you left and headed into an empty room, seems like someone was very daring…."

"It wasn't any dirty thing that occurred."

「パーティーの最中に空き部屋へ引っ張り込むとは、中々大胆な事をすると思ったものじゃが……」

「そんな色気のある話じゃなかったんだよなぁこれが」

What had happened was Yuusuke was pulled away from his position in the modest party by Sun to the next room as she wanted to "talk" about she herself wanting to join the Darkness God Corps. The reason she changed the location was because she was embarrassed to talk about it in front of everyone.

"It will stand out too extensively."

"Really I wonder…."(Aka loli + yuu)

Though, it seems almost too natural that for the first time Yuusuke and Violet's view matches.

"But, why did she so suddenly do this?"

"Hm, actually~~"

Razshia is adept in handling medicine with her knowledge of it, while Rasanasha had quite a huge information network. If one were to include the members of the Darkness God corps, those around Yuusuke, all of them help him in some way or another. Feeling that she wasn't useful, Sun felt anxious.

Previously, in Rufk village he had spoke to Sun "to prepare work and a position that is suitable for her", but Yuusuke had been brooding over it, thus Sun petitioned to be placed into the Darkness God Corps if possible.

"I see… just to be closer, so what do you think about it."

"Sun actions is unexpected despite her demure."

Come to think about it, when she was living in Zeshald's mansion, she headed to the shrine of the Evil god all by herself to place an offering, she even headed into the forest to forage for firewood and nuts, she even went to the city and had been actively moving in a big area around the village.

In the village she had Bahana who she is intimate with, who is a little like a heroine, there is also Zeshald who himself is retired and is someone who had accomplished many feats. Sun who was brought up by these 2 people didn't seem to be influenced by them.

"As you can see she is the total opposite of Violet."

"Nng? What do you mean?"

“On the surface you look lively and filled with valour, but inside there are places where you’re easily hurt.”

As he said it without hesitation, Violet’s face immediately turned red and in order to hide her embarrassment she threw the dishes at him. Repeatedly.

“(coughing) …however, it isn’t as easy like that."

“As I thought it does seems like that.”

The title of knight is a position only bestowed by the king. No matter how much the Captain of the Darkness God Corps Yuusuke is being praised as a hero, it wasn’t a suitable reason to allow an artless into the palace knight corps, thus it poses an expected problem.

More so, the current timing wasn’t good. The destruction of Nossentes, the place known as the birthplace of the 4 major god faith, and is now currently under the rising power, Gazzetta a Artless country, thus if the rumor of the king were to enlist an Artless into a knight corps, it would spout criticism of the king being frightened and trying to curry favor with Gazzetta.

“We need some reasons.”

「何か理由が必要なんだよな」

Yuusuke plan to create an ideal foundation for Sun in Darkness God Corps, thus he approached to consult Violet and company.

Starting from the Darkness God Corps members, the people around Yuusuke knew of the close relationship that Sun shared with him. There wasn’t any disdain particularly of the Artless, thus there should be no problem working together.

“Hmmm. do you have any good ideas Krielov?”

“Finally you notice me… well, first~~”

According to Krielov proposal, Sun would be appointed as the Darkness God Corps exclusive attendant and after having piling up on actual results she could be officially enlisted.

“To obtain support from more people for the results of the tasks done, the number of people against it will decrease.”

Right now, there is an dispatch request from the soldiers corps for the investigation on the happiness level of the people, as Krielov mention.

As there were witness and damage reports of magical beasts going up in the southeast region. Since more than a decade ago, it was impossible for magical beasts to do damage so close to the city. Most likely it’s a story known as “Monster extermination” that was well received by the public.

“Monster extermination eh.”

“If it isn’t that dangerous, will you go ahead with it? Sun is good with the bow.”

“Princess, first we need the authorization of King Esvosbus to appoint her as an exclusive attendant, else we can’t continue with it.”

Immediately having a decided look, Violet was brimming with an appearance like she would come back full of stories to tell, as she looks at her trainer and dedicated guard in a cool manner. Although he himself also seems to be filled with pride, but his self-awareness make it seem unlikely.

“Let’s permit it.”

Violet had prepared “Eating together” and “taking a walk together” cards to challenge and negotiated with her father the King, but Sun’s appointment was easily permitted. Puzzled by the anticlimactic results, Violet came back to inform Yuusuke and Kreilov.

“I believe the people that were surrounding him that needed convincing were all gone.”

“Gone you say….”

“I believe that the King is also thinking about things.”

In any case, Sun was appointed as the Darkness God Corp’s exclusive attendant.

Chapter 59: Sun's Determination

Dressed up in good quality white servant clothes, Sun was nervously holding the bow that she had received from Bahana. The same day that she was appointed to be a servant of the Darkness God Corps, the group was ordered to investigate a report of demon beasts ravaging around the countryside.

Sun's equipment was enchanted to a similar level of the ones that Yuusuke wore. Although the equipment greatly enhanced her abilities, the girl relied much more on Yuusuke's skills than on the quality of the equipment.

"You are saying that, but without your customized equipment your abilities could not even be considered average."

"That's true…"

"… I agree…"

"Eh? Eh? Why are you speaking like that, Yuusuke-san?"

Yuusuke became somewhat down, drawing letters from a different world as his feet. Sun, absentminded from the stress, frantically tried to calm her friend, who was performing yet another strange ritual.

"Captain, I am sorry to interrupt your happy time (flirting), but our preparations are done."

"You call this flirting? I am feeling depressed here!" retorted Yuusuke as he boarded the carriage, followed by Sun.

"Well, you also have to trust your equipment. At least I think that it is part of your own ability." (Fonke)

"Even if you are borrowing the power, it does not change the fact that you are being useful to the captain," said Vermeer in a quiet yet persuasive voice.

"If this power makes me more useful to the Captain, I will gladly accept it," added Shaheed in a somewhat louder voice.

"You are right… I will do my best to be useful to Yuusuke-san." (Sun)

"Not to "Everyone", but only to "Yuusuke" that's so like you, Sun." (Fonke)

"Eh?! Ah… uhm, I'm sorry! I will try my best for everyone." (Sun)

"You are making her nervous, Fonke!"

Although Sun was just a personally appointed servant of the Darkness Gad Corps, she had already received a lot of attention from the other members and the atmosphere in the party once again was lively. Just like that the group left the palace and went on their way towards the south eastern region of Fonclanc.

***

The next day, late in the afternoon the Darkness God Corps arrived at the southeastern relay town. On their way, the party stopped at Rufk and announced Sun's enlistment to Zeshald, Bahana, and the rest of the villagers. The merry atmosphere that lasted for the entire trip got slightly ruined a little bit after the party's arrival at the town.

"Somehow I have a bad feeling about this town."

"There sure are a lot of mercenaries around here… I don't think you need that many to fight off the demon beasts."

"You wouldn't say that if the beasts actually attacked."

"I don't want to believe it, but a lot of them look like bandits to me."

The party started their mission by intending to confirm the details that were mentioned in the trade association branch office's request. Currently they had arrived in front of this branch office.

The travelling mood that had set in amongst the members of the corps had immediately vanished. Although their looks did not change, the air around them changed completely. Noticing that, Sun couldn't help but tense up herself.

"Welcome, please come in. I am the appointed chief of this association branch."

"Yuusuke, of the Darkness God Corps. Could you tell me everything about the request regarding the evil beasts?"

At first, the head of the branch office was worried that, instead of the requested knights, he was sent a bunch of weaklings. However, he quickly noticed that the young captain of this squad had black hair and was clad in a black uniform that resembled that of the palace knights. He even had an armed artless with him for some reason. Thinking about the group that seemed like a ragtag bunch of random people the name of the Darkness God Corps appeared in his mind. When the captain himself confirmed that, the chief warmly welcomed them.

In a meeting room of the branch office lodging house, the chief updated Yuusuke's party on the situation. Until their arrival, the chief had used the mercenaries that the association had hired for him to perform a certain investigation.

A few days ago that adventurer group had sent an assistance request and no communication had been had with them since.

"The adventurers that we had hired were also specialized in destroying the demon beasts…"

"Hmm, I think that there's a possibility to declare a state of emergency, or, rather, we are in one already."

Since he had lost an expert group of adventurers at a site that was quite close to the town, the chief, fearing that the town might be in danger, had hastily tried to assemble a rescue force for the missing adventurers from the remaining fighters, tasked with defending the town. However, it soon became apparent that they lacked skilled wind arts users and it was too dangerous to send a group comprised only of fighters on a mission where communication was essential.

"Gathering mercenaries was difficult?"

"It's because of Gazzetta being a hot topic right now. Everyone capable of gathering intelligence had already been hired."

It seemed that the supply could not meet the demand and that every capable wind arts user was already hired by another people.

The official mission description for the Darkness God Corps was to investigate the damage on the evil beasts so no one expected that it would become a rescue mission. However the situation seemed dangerous and Yuusuke could not just turn around and leave like that.

"Understood. Given that we're to investigate that place, tell me everything about the mercenaries that you had employed."

After consulting with Vermeer, Yuusuke decided to search for the missing adventurers. Depending on the situation he decided to employ the mercenaries from the town to help him. However, because they might get ambushed at any time during the mission, he also needed to consider Sun's position.

"With that decided, please use the rooms over there and rest for today. I am expecting great results from the Darkness God Corps."

***

That night, everyone gathered in Yuusuke's room to prepare for the mission and discuss the fine details of the plan. Fonke raised his hand during the discussion where everybody stated their opinion and talked about the best possible plan.

"Before that, can I ask one thing Captain?"

"Hmm, what is it Fonke?"

"Are you the God of Calamity?"

"You are being noisy."

Fonke joked about the Darkness God Corps being involved in one dangerous situation after another. Aisha strictly cut him off, declaring that this was not a time for his jokes.

The discussion started off in a heat, with everyone discussing on who will take on the role of the investigators. When everyone's roles were decided, the last remaining question was Sun's position in case that they were forced to fight.

"If we get ambushed by bandits, an archer that has no experience in shooting humans will only hinder us."

"They are not difficult to aim at… Do you have some hunting experience or bow training?"

"I have only shot at fake birds together with Violet-sama…"

"Maybe it's better for you to return to the city and train in using the bow…"

There was no problems with her handling of the bow or accuracy, but the lack of combat experience was huge. Equipment had boosted her abilities sufficiently for her to wield significant power, yet the way that she used this power depended solely on her.

The subject of this discussion herself knew that she was a blunder on this emergency mission, but she did not want to be sent back to the city and spoke.

"It's alright! I'll try my best!"

"…Sun."

"Well, I think it will turn out alright if the person herself has that much spirit."

"I can't deny that our group is short on offense."

"We have already seen how scary an artless can be if one wields a weapon."

Vermeer and the other members accepted Sun's willful declaration. Sun accepted everyone's expectations and encouragement with her straight eyes, only a slight blush betraying her shyness.

"Well then, are you ready to come with us tomorrow?"

"Yes!"

Thus, for the mission tomorrow, Sun was assigned to be an archer for the group, a very unusual task amongst the knight corps of the palace.

***

Shinha was browsing through some documents with a serious expression on his face in the former Divine Parliament building in the former Nossentes Capital of Patrucia Nost. Described in these documents, that Ayukas had found in the research laboratory, were the Nossentes experiments with the evil beasts.

"This…is this also Divine Parliament's doing?"

"No, think that the researchers had done that on their own in an attempt to procure better financing. Do you think that the Parliament would have been oblivious about it?"

"Still, did the guys themselves understood what they were doing here?"

"No matter the age, it is easy for the researchers to get lost in their research and lose any reason. It's just like the divine art users of the current age that have no memory of the rich history of the White Tribe and the fall of the [Colored] that the Evil God before Wizard had brought on (ref to Ch 27)."

"Judging from what Yuusuke usually does, it seems that he is not related to the earlier Evil Gods."

"…is he different?"

"We certainly took advantage of the existence of the Evil God to take down the Divine Parliament, but…"

The documents described, in fine detail, the results of the research of an organization that had continued its work for a long time behind the scene. That said, these experiments were very dangerous to the common divine arts users.

“Basically, they have recreated something more than 2400 years old.”

At that time, a large population of the [Colored] had suddenly diminished. It was around the time that the black Evil God (beast) had descended and gave the White Tribe its chance at prosperity. This is the return that the village shaman had prospected.

“…as a King of Gazetta, you should be feeling happy right now.”

Chapter 60: Natural Enemy

The next day, the Darkness God Corps was preparing for their journey in front of the trade association branch building. This made the merchants around the town happy as they required a lot of supplies for their mission. The profit for them was much bigger when a government military detachment was buying supplies than when adventurers from the associated adventurer's guild were restocking for another mission.

"How about these? This is a new product that is recommended for camping outside. It's a must have for adventurers that allows for a pleasant sleep, even in the wilderness."

It was a high quality sleeping bag, made from leather and cloth – a copy of the [Pleasant sleeping bag] that had spread like wildfire between the adventurers. Although no one managed to understand why the newly created bags did not have the effect of the originals, which originated from the former Nossentes knights, the quality of these copies was still high.

"Ah. We brought our own, so we don't need these."

"These were originally created by our Captain."

"HEY IDIOT! Shh! Shh!"

"What?! The originals were created by the Darkness God Corps?!"

"In that case, would you want to see our special wares?" the merchants continued aggressively suggesting their own wares over one another. It was really hard to evade them while simultaneously preparing for the mission. The branch chief avoided them as not to interfere with the preparations, so they had a hard time finishing their packing with all the merchants around.

"Pheeew… I'm beat…"

"Good work, Captain"

"Water… please…"

"I am sorry for not being of much help…"

Yuusuke thanked the three women that were in the carriage with him when they had finally escaped the merchants.

***

The Darkness God Corps had departed the trading post. In the late afternoon they had crossed into Trent Rieta's territory and had approached the area from where the adventurers had sent their last emergency request. Crooked trees and thick overgrowth stretched across on both sides of the road.

"This is the place, eh?"

"Captain, there!"

The trade company's carriage stood abandoned slightly further up the road. Traces of a fire could be seen near it, however it had not been used in a while.

"Are there any people nearby?"

"There are … no traces of anyone… ah, I can feel a faint trace of someone from the forest!"

They stopped before the other carriage and disembarked. Everyone was alert, vigilant of their surroundings. They could hear sounds of birds and insects around them, but from that particular direction, for some reason, not a sound could be heard.

"I don't like this…"

Vermeer, who was checking the fire, found several strange tracks around the area and warned everyone against unseen danger. He could tell at a glance that the owner of these footprints had way too big feet and way too long claws to be just a simple wild animal. By the depth of these tracks, it was evident that the owner was heavy – it easily fit into a description of an evil beast.

"Hey man, are you serious?"

"Evil beasts… Although we did not encounter them when we were travelling to Nossentes, can we deal with them with just us?"

"Well, one of them isn't much of a problem, but…"

"Judging from these tracks, I think there should be at least three of them."

Feeling that this might be much more dangerous than anyone expected, Yuusuke was prepared to erect walls to protect his party at all times.

Basically, when performing this customization he needed to decide on the affected area, group up the ground into a map item, harden it, and copy and paste the blocks to create the wall. There was plenty of material to use was, but to create a wall this big took a substantial amount of time.

"?! S-someone's coming… I feel wind arts and earth arts auras… I think they number around three people."

"Vermeer, tell them to identify themselves."

"Understood."

Aisha and Sun were watching the area to the other side of the carriage, while Isotta stepped behind them and continued to monitor the area with her wind arts. Yuusuke prepared to engage the enemy together with Shaheed and Fonke while he ordered Vermeer to hail the approaching party.

"Freeze, identify yourselves. Tell me your affiliation and ranks."

"Eh? Knights?"

"We are an investigation group that was hired by the trade association's branch office."

“We have wounded people here. Were you sent here to assist us?”

The newly arrived people belonged to the missing adventurers group. Apparently their communication type wind arts user got injured and was unable to use his arts. Yuusuke nodded to Vermeer, who was looking at him, waiting for his Captain’s decision.

“For the time being, call Aisha here. We’ll escort her to the wounded.”

***

“Evil beast and strange divine arts aura?”

“Ah, I thought I had sensed something strange at first… but I must have been wrong.”

“Something was wrapped up in some sort of strange aura, but the aura changed very quickly.”

“The light from the fire arts had gone out and the movement assistance wind arts had also ceased functioning.”

“We were attacked by the evil beast just after we left that place and started moving towards the camp. However the strength of our offensive arts was also lower than usual. We separated and managed to get back to the highway, but two of our teammates had gone missing. The beast had continued prowling around the carriage but it seemed to be afraid to go out onto the open road. The others had suffered heavy injuries but have managed to hold out with the help of the recovery medicine.”

“I know that communication type wind arts can be blocked, but for them to block buff and offensive type arts as well…”

“Is there really an evil beast with such powers?”

Faced with a huge lack of information about the beast, Yuusuke, who was not familiar with the evil beast species, asked if anyone knew if such an evil beast existed. However everyone just shook their heads, while Vermeer said, “There are none.”

“Evil beasts are able to use select divine arts, based on their species, however there is no such divine art that fits their description. Moreover, if there were evil beasts with such abilities, they would be a threat to everyone in Kaltcio and every country would do their utmost to exterminate them. This evil beast probably has some sort of a divine art that obstructs its targets from using their divine arts,“ finished Vermeer.

“This evil beast seems more dangerous than the entire Blue Garden battle, how can we ever hurt it?”

“At any rate we have come here to investigate the evil beast and had confirmed that it had attacked the adventurers. We can consider that the beast attacks were done systematically.”

Shaheed implied that there was a possibility that a band of thieves was lurking nearby and was using this beast in order to carry out their attacks. He proposed the party to return to the town and ask for help. However the three adventurers had argued against his reasoning.

"Wait, if such a group really exists, there are no doubts that they have already noticed us."

"I am certain that I felt a strange divine arts aura, however I did not feel any people close by."

"The missing two fellows can still be nearby."

The three suggested to look for their missing comrades and to try to scout a possible location of the beast's nest. They were adventurers whom were proud of their skills and continued to argue that Shaheed's reasoning was not the best.

"Even if you say that…"

"Captain, what should we do?"

Thus, whether to go back to the city and call the mercenaries for reinforcements, or continue the investigation and the search for missing people like this, the final decision was left in Yuusuke's hands.

***

"Hmm, I wonder if the decision I made was correct…"

"I will abide by your decision, Yuusuke-san. Please have more confidence in yourself."

In the end, Yuusuke decided to continue the search and investigation mission. He made this decision based on the assumption that there was still the possibility of the two missing adventurers being alive. In that case, returning to the city would cost them a lot of valuable time.

"I'll follow your orders, Captain." (Isotta)

"We were your subordinates since the beginning. We have no qualms with following your decision, Captain." (The guys)

"Well, if captain built a fortress again, I think we would have nothing to fear." (Fonke)

"You are relying on Captain's power too much, Fonke. But I will also support captain's decision." (Aisha)

"M-me too…" (Sun)

Thus Yuusuke had erected a small fortress at the side of the road and left the injured adventurers along with their escort there. The remaining members of the party, led by one of the adventurers, had turned towards the forest to search for the evil beast's nest.

***

Although the sun was still high up, the inside of the forest was shrouded in darkness. Their advancement was slow, because they had to create markings so that they would be able to find their way back. After a while the Darkness God Corps party had arrived at the location, with a marked tree, that adventurers had warned them about.

“This is the place that the evil beast’s presence got mixed with the strange divine arts aura.’

“Do you feel anything, Isotta?”

“I am sure of it… there are signs of an evil beast, and I can also feel a divine arts aura… but I can’t make out the type of the aura.”

The aura was different even from her Captain’s special aura. It felt more primal. Even if it was a divine arts aura, just by sensing it made her nervous, explained Isotta.

So far Isotta had always been precise – she could even sense artless people that no other wind arts user was known to be able to do.

The aura that she felt right now certainly did not belong to an artless, it also certainly did not belong to any type of divine arts aura that Isotta was familiar until now. She could only call it an “unknown divine arts aura.”

“Hmm, can it be that this divine arts aura does not belong to that evil beast?”

“Ah!… You may be right, it can surely be explained like that!”

Hearing this chatter, Vermeer and Shaheed exchanged worried glances. Shaheed was the one that started speaking afterwards.

“Can it be that what captain said was correct?”

“Hmm, what do you mean?”

“… You are making assumptions by abiding to common knowledge. But you mustn’t forget that Captain’s power completely ignores that common knowledge.”

“Well, I can’t think of any evil beast that can obstruct divine arts.”

Fonke joined into their conversation, arguing that the world might be different than the others thought. And his words rang true, it did not matter that what they held as common knowledge before. Meeting Yuusuke had shown them that one could not blindly rely on that knowledge anymore.

Maybe such a beast was common inside the vast forest that was called the Sea of Trees, or maybe it was a one of a kind beast that has spawned from an unknown source.

“They have driven the evil beasts away from the roads, but they could have easily evolved while living deep in the forest.”

Nonetheless, it seems that ignoring evil beasts had let to this troublesome scenario and the party advanced towards the beast’s nest to exterminate it.

As they passed the marked tree the strange aura they had felt got stronger. After they had wandered around the area for a while, the adventurer that had acted as a guide told them that this was the place that his party had fought the evil beast and urged Yuusuke’s party to be cautious about their surroundings.

“…tsk Captain, my divine arts had become unstable.”

“Mine as well, I can’t even create a water ball anymore.”

“My wind has completely scattered. I am also unable to buff us anymore.”

The flame that Vermeer had conjured over his palm had become unstable and started flickering and Shaheed had lost the ability to use his offensive water arts. Fonke had also become unable to use his movement assistance buffs. All the members blamed it on the strange divine arts aura.

“Aisha and Isotta, how about you two?”

“My wind arts… This disruption seems to resemble a normal communication type wind arts disruption…and the strange divine arts aura… seems to be so thick that if feels like I could eat it… eh, that was a strange comparison, wasn’t it?”

“…it’s useless. It seems that our opponent this time is highly skilled.”

“Hmm… that’s amazing!”

To confirm the usability of his power, Yuusuke had called out his customization menu, however there were no noise on the display and he felt no other obstructions. It seemed that his power was not hindered in any way by the strange aura that had affected everyone else.

There was no sense in turning back after having come this far, so everyone unsheathed their weapons and proceeded onwards with caution. The adventurer that guided them tried calling out for his comrades but had received no response.

As they proceeded further, the light that Vermeer had conjured with his fire arts had gone out completely. In response, the adventurer took out something resembling a lamp from his satchel and managed to keep their way lit up for now.

Other members of the party had also confirmed that they completely lost their ability to use their divine arts. Everyone started thinking about dropping the investigation and turning back more and more in their minds. Just when someone was about to call for it…

“I can see it, the evil beast’s nest.”

The adventurer pointed out ahead where the nest was laid at the bottom of a huge tree. It was made from hardened vines, twigs, and leafs and resembled a bird’s nest.

“I can’t believe it. We have really found it.”

“Is that the beast’s nest? I can’t imagine the thing that would live here.”

The party had changed their formation to put Isotta and Aisha, who had lost all their combat effectiveness, in the middle and advanced forward, expecting an attack from the beast lurking in the shadows of the nearby undergrowth. When they approached the nest enough to be able to examine the inside of it, some cylinder shaped, squirming object had fallen out of the nest.

“!!”

"Eeeek!!"

Aisha and Isotta instinctively screamed and averted their eyes. Sun also stiffened, while her face became expressionless. Vermeer, Shaheed, and Fonke, who lead the party, stayed silent as they did once before at the fortress, but a look of despair has spread over the adventurer's face.

The object that fell out of the evil beast's nest was a human's arm. Inside a nest they spotted larvae that were feeding on a human body that was cut up into square pieces. Taking a good look into the nest they had spotted dozens of larvae that they thought to be spawns of the evil beast.

One of the larvae had crawled out of the nest to feed on the arm. Seeing that, the adventurer who had approached the arm to investigate it from a close distance, had crushed it with a sole of his boot. The arm seemed to belong to one of his missing companions.

"FUCK! FUCK! You have to be kidding me! Why do these… these pieces of shit have to be feeding on this?!"

The adventurer had recovered a ring that became a memento from the poor fellow's separated arm, and had spat out these words as he continued to squish the larvae.

"Strange… this nest is really strange.

Shaheed calmly pointed out the unnaturalness of the nest and the body that was cut up and thrown inside for the larvae to feed on for everyone else who could only stare at this sight without as much as uttering a word. Moreover, the territory around the nest lacked claw marks that evil beasts usually used to mark their territory and the number of larvae in the nest was also unusually high.

Even more, an evil beast could not cut up human flesh into the fine pieces that could be seen inside the nest with only its claws and fangs – the human looked like it was cut into pieces by a sharp edged tool. All in all, the possibility that this nest was made artificially was very high.

"Someone had intentionally placed a nest here. I think its purpose is to breed these larvae."

Looking closely, a myriad of bones and pieces of rotting human flesh were scattered around the nest.

"Who in the hell would do this… and for what purpose…?"

"Captain, I think we should deal with the nest quickly and return to the trading post as soon as possible."

"That's right, send a –– that's right, we can't use wind arts here."

Everyone's (but Yuusuke's) divine arts were completely shut out and they needed to ignite a fire first if they wanted to burn the nest. Thus the Darkness God Corps started by going into the nest to recover the human remains and killing all the larvae.

The adventurer, who had fallen into depression after his violent outburst, also started to

slowly move his body.

Vermeer, Shaheed, and Fonke started killing the larvae in the nest with their daggers, while the adventurer used the oilwood to start a fire.

Aisha, Isotta, and Sun were gathering dry wood from around them – their job was tending to the fire. Yuusuke had borrowed the lamp from the adventurer and was helping Vermeer's group with their task.

By the way, this lamp was a popular commodity that was made using a process that was a specialty of a certain town in Trent Rietta. It was a peculiar item that was made to glow by combining a certain plant with a special type of crystal.

The larvae were dying swiftly, however the strange aura that blocked the usage of the divine arts showed no signs of weakening. Everyone continued disposing of the nest in tension, awaiting the attack of the three evil beasts that had attacked the adventurers.

They had finally finished killing all the larvae and collecting the human remains. Just when they had set the fire on the nest…

"!! Captain! I can feel the presence of the evil beasts!"

Isotta was still unable to use the divine arts but she still somehow managed to sense the approaching beast. She warned that the presence that seemed to be trailing the party from a distance started rapidly charging towards them.

"Ri-right and front, and also from the back… What? It can't be, their numbers have increased!"

"Isotta, calm down! No need to rush. Explain the situation as clearly as you can."

Calming Isotta, whose voice was frantic as if there was nothing else they could do, Yuusuke prepared pitfalls and defensive walls around then in his customization menu screen.

"T-the count of enemy signatures… is going up and down… I can't pinpoint their location either… I have never encountered such a situation before."

"Say, don't you think this kid is not suitable for this line of work…?"

"Don't worry, she's an excellent wind arts user."

Adventurer inquired about Isotta, doubtful because of her manner of speech and attire was completely mismatched with Vermeer's group. Yuusuke's answer had clearly shown confidence in his subordinate's skills and that their presence here was not just for the sake of appearances.

The Darkness God Corps that was hailed as the strongest corps in Fonclanc, and were led by a man, hailed as a hero of the Deernook fortress. Isotta blushed when Yuusuke put his hands over her shoulders, while Yuusuke made sure that the adventurer properly realized his trust in his subordinates.

Although he said that as an emergency measure, it did not mean that what he said was superficial. Isotta was able to locate the presence of the intelligent evil beasts, lurking

around the area. She was the only one that was still able to catch glimpses of the divine arts auras.

However, even If she was able to sense the beasts, it was impossible even for her to accurately locate them under these circumstances.

"Uhm… I can surely feel them nearby… but this aura is just too strange."

"Calm down, it might be that they are using that to prevent you from using your wind arts."

Their vision and foothold were both bad inside the forest, on top of that they did not know their opponent's position, nor its location. They were probably surrounded by multiple evil beasts. Yuusuke tried his best to calm his subordinates in this difficult situation, even if he himself was trying to guess what his opponent was.

Yuusuke's own Customize-Create power was unhindered by this divine arts aura. In addition to the calming effect of his equipment, he had his knowledge from the games of his original world. Basing his conjecture on that knowledge he had a general idea on what his enemy was, but these types of monsters were very rare even in those games.

Therefore, to prepare the people of Kaltcio, who had no experience with such enemies, from guessing what they were facing, and for them to receive as little shock as possible from the initial encounter he tied his best to remain calm. After all, if he remained strong, some of his calmness would also pass to his subordinates that had an absolute trust in him.

Finally, Yuusuke's brave front was the thing that was able to break the mood.

"…! Over there!"

With a whistle, an arrow had disappeared in a gap between the trees. In an instant, the aura that had enveloped the entire area had become chaotic (unstable). With another arrow, shot between the trees, a beast's roar shook the air.

"These bastards… Captain we are able to use our divine arts again!"

"The obstructive aura has weakened."

Artless could not feel the divine arts aura the same way that the divine art users could. Sun was the only one in the party, who was completely ignorant about it and thus could not use it to search for the beasts. Instead, she had used her eyes, shooting at the suspicious shadows that she could make out between the trees.

When the aura weakened, the party members regained their ability to use their divine arts. Along with that, Isotta's searching accuracy had also increased.

"Ah! Fount it! There's one between those trees. The other one is over there."

"Sun! Shaheed!"

"Yes!"

"Fonke, buff her bow."

Sun had immediately assumed shooting posture and notched an arrow into the bow while Fonke used his arts to buff her, as buffing type wind arts could be used this way to increase the capabilities of the weapon. Shaheed shouted these instructions to Fonke while he was creating his water ball.

He had an apologetic look in his eyes, because he took the initiative to issue the orders.

“Nice follow up, Shaheed. Continue directing with Fonke like that.”

“Understood. Here we go, Sun-chan!”

Sun’s arrow and Shaheed’s water ball flew in the directions that Isotta had detected before. With that, the divine arts aura that was covering the entire area before had completely vanished and the traces of the evil beasts seemed to lead off deep into the Trent Rietta’s Sea of Trees.

“How’s the situation?”

“… it seems that they are gone now.”

Suddenly they had become aware that the sounds of birds and bugs, that had been silent for a long time, had returned back some time ago.

Chapter 61: The afterwards of a melancholy cloud

At the site of the highway, small groups of mercenaries were gathered, a confirmation of the survey area was being perform. A small fortress that blended into the surrounding scenery was built in this unnatural location and was being used as the forward base for the survey, water and food were brought into the place.

“Well, we shall head back first.”

“Thanks for your hard work! Leave the rest to us.”

After the survey duty of the Darkness God Corps was taken over by the mercenary troop, they took the carriage back down the night road to the relay town. The adventurer group was still at the site continuing their activities. It seemed that the recovery and transportation of the victims’ bodies will be done by tomorrow or the day after.

“Has Sun gone to sleep?”

“Yes, most likely she is tired from all that tension.”

Yuusuke felt relieved after peeping and seeing that Sun was quietly asleep on Aisha’s lap. As she continued to let her sleep until they reached the town while gently stroking her bangs.

“Ah erm, would you like to switch….?”

“Nonono, it’s alright. Anyway, it will become embarrassing.”

Yuusuke joked about it as he saw Sun lying on her lap. While Isotta who was sitting directly opposite began staring at Yuusuke’s lap without him noticing.

Just before midnight, Yuusuke was still awake in the relay town planning for the trip back to Sanc Adiet tomorrow morning, at the same time he was eating his late dinner within the living quarters of the trade association branch.

“I believe that Sun did well.”

“I agree, it was quite a job well done.”

“Just a shot from her and the situation changed.”

“Ahm, Thank you very much.”

Sun was getting embarrassed from all the praises she got from everyone. To witness a ghastly scene, not to mention an encounter with a magical beast on her first mission, one that was a mutation made for battle, for some reason it felt similar yet different from Yuusuke.

“However, that beast….I wonder who had controlled it?”

“Although it didn't look normal, the way it moved felt like someone was controlling it.”

The topic about the magical beasts came up. Shaheed and Vermeer began discussing the magical beast's artificial nest and it's unique ability, an ability which could obstruct divine arts itself, the topic had developed that the magical beasts might be military trained since it's movements seemed systematic.

"There's the military used magical beast ….."

"The worst case, is the magical beast we had encountered this time."

"In the end, to surmise that time, both parties might have been successful."

「軍用の魔獣なんてのもいるのか……」

「あくまでも、今回出くわした魔獣に関して、ですがね」

「結局、あの時の推察は両方当たっていたのかもしれない」

In other words, the initial thoughts of Vermeer were "obtaining the magical beast" and "dealing with the one controlling it", though Yuusuke pointed out that "the magical beast had an ability which obstructed divine arts", up until now no one had ever thought about this kind of situation.

But, when it comes to the use of strategic objectives, whether it could distinguish between friends or foes, thus it is difficult deploy them. Even though Blue Garden's spies had used them to attack Fonclanc's ranches, how much control they had is unknown.

In other words, even if that was resolved, it would be difficult to handle them as a strong military asset.

"So the person performing this experiment might be in Trent Rietta."

In any case, now they have to let the higher ups decide, as Yuusuke had already achieved his mission objective.

12th day, wind month of Zalnar, Evening ~~

A large number of refugees who had fled Nossentes's destruction had begun to show up, while Gazzetta had not shown any signs or large movement up until now. After returning safely to Sanc Adiet and reporting on the completion of their mission. The Darkness God Corps members went into standby mode, after dropping Sun off at the mansion, Yuusuke headed to his private room in the palace to tamper with the tool he had purchased in the relay town.

"Sun! Yuusuke! Ng? Where's Sun?"

After slipping away from her studies, Violet had come over to the room immediately as she saw the Darkness Corps returned.

"She seemed to be very tired, so I dropped her off at the mansion earlier."

"Fumu, I see….thanks for your hard work."

Violet was scratching her cheek while looking at Yuusuke toying with the tools. It looked like a cylindrical with a square top umbrella covering a hanging bracket lamp.

On the outside it looked like a common ordinary lantern, however when the lights were turned on, it emitted a mysterious pale blue and green light.

"Rin Lamp, what are you going to do with it?"

"Oh, so this is a Rin Lamp."

"What? Is it possible you bought it without knowing?"

"Ah, cause it seems fun."

It's a general lamp that is commonly used in the cities of Trent Rietta. It's made from a moss called "solar moss" which sticks on the skin of a particular tree bark with an ore called "Water stone" allowing it to emit light. That said once every 10 days there is a need to top up with water instead of oil.

The solar moss was a light source that clinged onto trees, and could only be found in parts of Trent Rieta's Sea of Trees. Because the tree required special environment to grow, it had limited the harvesting location of the moss.

In addition, contrary to it's name, the solar moss was very weak to dehydration and withered easily. Unlike other countries, there is a natural humid climate around Trent Reitta, thus it was difficult to export it.

Violet explained that due to these reasons, although the Rin lamp was a convenient and safe tool for a stable light source, without the use of fire, it wasn't widely spread, only within the region of Trent Rietta.

Violet had a hobby of liking unusual things, apparently she had previously mail ordered one of them, after obtaining one through difficulty, due to the brightness of the room it didn't work.

"We have some researchers who tried cultivating the moss, but it isn't really working out."

"Hmm, the Solar moss?"

Since the relay town was the closest Trent Reitta town to the road, the lamp that was used is normally easy to come by. But, due to the arid climate of Fonclanc, to use and maintain a certain number of mosses would be difficult.

Incidentally, the water stone is easily available. Since there was no other uses for it other than the Rin lamp, thus only a enthusiast tool shops deals with it.

"Let's cultivate them under my basement. I will get Razshia who has spare time to manage them in the mansion."

"Hohoho, that is quite interesting."

It would be a good reliever for her who isn't going outside much, this might also be able to be used for chemical research, as Yuusuke viewed the solar moss through a dull

cylinder which emits a low light.

A customized cultivation case would be needed in order to prepare a suitable environment. To make full use of the gimmick feature, would allow the temperature and humidity constant and it shouldn't be difficult.

If the cultivation was successful, it could replace the lightning of an oil tree with this convenient light source.

"I would like to go over to Trent Rietta to examine the ecology of the Solar Moss."

"That's true….but the timing now is bad, wait until the situation calms down before going."

"O yeah, there was the magical beast incident."

"Uuu, umm."

From the start of a normal mission, which became a beast extermination, but ended alright as Yuusuke muttered. But first Sun's success of the mission should be reported, in order to complete the first step of the plan Krielov had hatched.

"I pity those adventurers who became victims…."

"....Violet?"

Seeing Violet showing her consideration for the victims of the incident, Yuusuke felt a little discomfort. Previously, when Yuusuke had survived the Gearhawk Fortress, Violet had caused some friction between them when feelings of disagreement had occurred, thus due to that she had began to think about things.

The mission this time around was recommended due to it's safety, but it had turned into quite a dangerous mission. Due to that, Yuusuke was confused about the situation that had taken form. But soon enough, the air had began to flow between these two people.

<....that's not like you.>

Yuusuke began to change the topic in order to change the atmosphere.

"Ah, erm Violet."

"? What's up?"

"Soon that thing will go into production."

The new prototype gimmick motor which was entrusted to Sorzak for R&D will soon be ready, the main gist was to mount a container on it. And that said, Violet's personal Go-Kart will go into production."

"OHHH! Finally the thing's completed stage, is it done?"

Yuusuke recalled the time he tested the free-running experimental sofa, the shining eyes from an excited Violet. As it wasn't a good idea to run amok down the palace corridor, they began discussing plans of running the experiments in places like the

training field.

“It’s going according to the forecast and currently it’s around jogging speed.”

“Ohhh~~I can’t wait for it.”

The previous cold atmosphere had disappeared.

Chapter 62: The Secret meaning behind the wind

~Blue Garden's 2nd capital, the fortified city of Paula.~

In the underground passage of the central facility, council parliament Reifold was walking lightly. Beside him was a person from the women troupe who was guiding him while explaining things to him.

"The atmosphere around here is a little weird. Don't you think so?"

"Is that so? It hasn't been long since I had joined the troupe, thus I am not very sure about it."

Reifold is well known in the upper tier of Blue Garden's government. Within the elite's troupes he is known as a "shrewd intelligence activist".

Because of that, his guide had distanced herself from the gossips within the organisation, as Reifold had a deep relation with the Divine arts instructor Zeshald who had once taught the rookie member, Plausha.

This time, Reifold had received a mission from King Esvosbus, thus he was visiting the facility through the normal route after obtaining the permission of Queen Risha.

"Just up ahead."

"Thank you, from this point onwards it would be fine for me to be alone."

Inside the underground central facility, the country's greatest sinners AKA state-level felony prisoners were being housed in cell compartments.(TL note: Lol alcatraz?)

His objective, to visit Paula's former supreme leader Izapnar. His question, to ask about one of their previous provocation operations against Fonclanc, about how they had managed to release a magical beast into the ranches of Sanc Adiet.

Although it is not known officially, it was revealed within the testimony of a former wind trouper that the magical beasts could receive orders to a certain extent.

"Yoz, it's been a while."

"....you, what you want?"

"There is something I would like to know, about the breeding of magical beast ~~ or maybe the seller of it? Something along that line."

The breeding of magical beasts. Reifold came to interrogate Izapnar in the prison to know about the possible route for domesticated magical beasts. The moment Izapnar heard about the " magical beast with anti-divine arts ability" he had a shocked look.

"Altering the magical beast array…"

"Oh? Judging from that reaction, I can assume you already knew of it's existence?"

"I have no idea where it came from, but a wind arts merchant was selling it. During that time it's divine arts capacity was low."

Originally, he wanted to use a relatively safe herbivorous type magical beast, but when he did the transaction with the merchant who trades in magical beasts, Izapnar was surprised when he was informed that the magical beasts weren't captured but bred.

The merchant who came to sell was saying that once completed, it could eventually be used as a weapon.

"What's the relation and whereabout of that merchant?"

"No Idea. I had Volmes to source for him, but when he entered Nossentes territory we couldn't really track where he goes."

Remembering the betrayal of his confidant, Izapnar grimaced his eyebrows slightly, and after hearing about the post details of the tracks of that confidant, he showed a complicated expression while twitching his nose.

"Haiz....that stupid guy."

After receiving the necessary information, Reifold turned towards the door, Izapnar suddenly remembered something and said.

"Oh yeah….that merchant, from time to time he uses the Trent Rietta's accent. Just like you."

"....hmmm, I see."

"Thanks for the consultation" as Reifold replied with his back facing him as he left the confinement cell.

While Reifold headed towards the underground cells of Paula, meanwhile in Volance Palace, Fonclanc's royal room, a meeting with the king was held regarding the response to the inquiry that was sent by Trent Rietta.

The next morning, while Violet was having her meal, Krielov began filling in the contents of their involvement and the details of the conference regarding the incident. The matter had only involved the Darkness God Corps, which might lead to some other big event, but there wasn't enough information.

"Is there no way to create a connection with a state similar to Nossentes?"

"At the current stage, it is impossible to judge."

Developing the magical beasts ability by making use of the external groups within the territories of your own country? The reply from Trent Rietta to that query was "an organisation which performs such a research activity does not exist in our country", please make countermeasures related to this matter.

"An organisation that uses humans as bait to feed the magical beasts is dangerous, thus the Trent Rietta government will also began an investigation operation."

In response to the inquiry from Fonclanc and the reports from the trade organizations, it seems that they are currently operating in full force to understand the situation.

"I wonder if it would be wise, any of the simple merchants of the trade association might accidentally be wrapped up in it."

"Because we do not have the full picture of the magical beast incident this time, findings from the investigation results for the scale of the incident weren't clear enough."

Nowadays it's highly unlikely for someone to encounter magical beasts on roads and due to this awareness, victims that had been reported were often being overlooked, thus a new number of verifications were to be carried out.

"We can only do nothing, but wait and see …"

Violet muttered while finishing up her breakfast as she chewed up the bird meat.

On the other hand, Yuusuke was having breakfast with Sun's group in his mansion while discussing about the Rin lamp and the solar moss. Razshia who is known as Yuusuke's slave, "slave in name" under his policy is sitting at the same table as them.

"For the moss cultivation, Rasa could you help with it please?"

"Ah, oh yeah. I should make her do something too."

Rasanasha was no longer an national official singing princess, as she had dedicated her singing to Yuusuke, the royal family recognized her transfer as his belongings, thus it is established that Yuusuke as an individual owns a singing princess.

So in order to purchase her one must go through Yuusuke, while Yuusuke's stand is unless she herself is okay with the customer the answer is no, thus currently she is at the same position as Razshia, spending her days idling with spare time.

Yuusuke was thinking of taking advantage of Rasanasha's connections to obtain the information of the researchers who were cultivating the moss. From here on, he would get these 2 people, Razshia and Rasanasha, to help in the research and development of the RIn lamp.

"Now then, let's head over to the palace today."

"Ah, yes. I will go prepare immediately."

Yuusuke stood up from his seat, as Sun headed to her room to change into her attendant of Darkness God Corps clothes.

"Have a nice day"

"Have a safe trip"

After being sent off by his servants and Razshia, Yuusuke and Sun headed towards the palace using the mansion's carriage. It seems that the new gearbox prototype was delivered to the palace yesterday by Sorzak and has been either brought to his personal

room or the soldiers' resting room.

"Sun, I entrust this to you."

"I understand. This time it's the Earth God Crop member."

Yuusuke entrusted a ring which amplifies the earth arts to Sun. It seems that today was the set date for distributing the ring of divine arts. Ever since they had returned from Nossentes, it had became Sun's duty to deliver these rings of divine arts to the members of the different God Corps. Because of this, the whispering of Sun's presence in the Palace have died down completely.

Though Sun's and Violet's relation doesn't seem to have changed even though she became an attendant, she was still counted as a member of the Darkness God Corps, thus people are realising that it might not have been a mere coincidence that it was a "princess's whim".

"Will you be practicing your bow today?"

"Yes, I will be alternating with the bow Aunt Bahana gave me and the one that Violet has loaned to me."

She was trying to grasp and correct her gripping of the bow Bahana gave her, a good and effective training method was to train her strength using a common bow.

"Ah~, so that method exists. I should train my physical strength by using some methods like…. a sword or something."

"Yuusuke-san, sword is it…?"

Sun who was constantly staring at Yuusuke's face showed a "I see" smile while tilting her head. As it seems unimaginable to her. The captain of the Darkness God Corps seemed to be stabbed.

"Ah ah I'm sorry! I didn't meant it that way, because Yuusuke doesn't seem to be the hot-blooded/ferocious type."

"No, it's just a problem as a man being a man…."

Looking at the burnt-out, boxer look a like, Yuusuke sitting on the pure white seat of the carriage, Sun was grinning as she gently held his arm while moving closer and whispering into his ears.

"Could I rely on Yuusuke-san?"

"Sun….is this a suggestion from Razshia?"

Seeing Sun being assertive while her cheeks were dyed red in embrassement, Yuusuke felt like he was suddenly poked in the heart.

"Eh! Noo it isn't, it's... it's a different thing…."

"Ahhh whatever, Sun is acting weird saying such strange things."

"~uu….I~I am….also interested in such things."

“Ng? Did you say something?”

Feeling sad, Sun muttered while she was looking out the window of the carriage, as she tilted her head towards Yuusuke and pouted saying “Nothing”.

Yuusuke and his group was riding the carriage through the streets of the noble district. Looking ahead was Volance palace shining as it bathed in the sunlight.

Today had begun as any other usual day in Sanc Adiet.

Chapter 63: End of the Season (Calendar), Start of the Holiday

"Ahahahaha~"

"Princess, it's almost time for your studies."

Krielov was running after the self-moving car prototype that Violet was thoroughly enjoying, riding it in circles around the knight corps training grounds. When the motor arrived the previous day, Yuusuke immediately assembled the wooden frame for the car and installed the engine. This was the car that Violet was test-driving right now.

As of yet, Yuusuke was still not used to producing motor vehicles, so the actual "car" was just a downscaled copy of the carriage that the corps used.

"It would not be impossible to think about using Gimmick power to improve the currently used carriages after all…"

"Yuusuke-dono! Please help me with her."

Yuusuke stood with his arms crossed, looking at Violet enjoying the trial model of the self-moving carriage, and thinking about the future direction of his development. Krielov brought him out of his thoughts as he called him while being completely out of breath himself. Meanwhile Violet was amusing herself by constantly avoiding Krielov and looked to be pretty hard to catch.

The current model exceeded Yuusuke's expectations and moved faster than a human during a jog, instead it was able to move at a speed equivalent to a human running with all his might. Although it was still possible to catch up with it, it was reasonably difficult to force the carriage to stop.

Since the frame is little, one had to bend their back forward to get hold of it. To do that at this speed would involve a huge risk of falling down. Moreover, even if someone managed to miraculously get ahold of it, they still had to preserve their balance and keep themselves from losing their footing. Or rather, this hypothetical scene was happening in front of Yuusuke's eyes.

"… Should I implement an emergency brake that would work from outside of the vehicle in the next model?"

Yuusuke noted this as he glanced at a teary eyed Violet, who was suffering under a storm of admonishments from a stain of mud that was once Krielov. As he did that he went towards his prototype vehicle and picked a part from the rear of the frame that was damaged during the chase.

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"By the way, your holiday is starting soon, Yuusuke. What are you going to do about this year's dance festival?"

"Ah that's right. You had that kind of event here."

Yuusuke was escorting Violet to her education room instead of Krielov who had to change his clothes. Violet's question reminded him of the time at the harvest festival at the Rufk village.

In a few days the earth calendar would end and the wind calendar would begin. The harvest festival was celebrated during the beginning of the earth calendar. The beginning of the wind calendar was celebrated with a dance festival. The Harvest festival was tinged with a shade of looking for a partner of expressing your feelings to your loved one, the Dance festival, on the other hand had a deep underlying tradition of marriage and betrothal.

"Remembering the atmosphere during the harvest festival, maybe I should stay in the city this time…"

"Aaahm… I am happy for the thought, but it would be bad tact for me to go to the dance festival with a consort."

This was the time of the year that the pressure from the Fiancé candidate's group was the strongest. Just in case, should the princess choose one of them as her future husband, she had to partner up with all of them (T.N. one by one) to get a grasp of each of their dispositions.

"Sounds like a bother."

"It's the worst…"

Violet sighed melancholically, leaving Yuusuke thinking for words that could console her. Like that, once again it became evident to him that the girl in front of him with her red hair bound into two swaying twintails is actually a princess that, in time, will have to choose a new king for this country.

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When Yuusuke finished escorting Violet to her room, he went to a different training area that was located outdoors. Sun was giving her all, training to use her bow there along with the soldiers that were practicing their long ranged divine arts.

"Sun."

"Ah, Yuusuke-san."

Sun, who was wearing her white servant's clothes and a slightly larger bow (compared to her usual one), looked at Yuusuke.

"It's a huge bow."

"Yes, but by wearing your ring I am able to draw it easily."

The bow was also long but the white haired girl was able to effortlessly handle it. "That's quite nice," thought Yuusuke and, unknowingly, smiled a smile that made the girl fluster.

In preparation for the dance festival that was supposed to start in a few days, Razshia was secretly giving Sun some tips. That information suddenly sprang to girls mind and

completely flustered her.

The girl was well aware of the meaning of the festival. An age that a girl was deemed suitable for marriage was sixteen in Kaltcio, and in the beginning of the last month Sun had turned eighteen and was now at the peak of her youth.

Girls tended to flock around Yuusuke for some reason. At the harvest festival, Sun too became aware of him as a member of the opposite sex, as she was watching him being flocked around by the other village girls. However, her feelings became much stronger compared to that time.

["I am not a beauty, nor am I cute. Neither do I have any special qualities. I am just a country girl with a huge scar over my belly…"]

Such a girl was able to meet this man, now hailed as a Hero of Fonclanc, by sheer luck at the shrine of the Evil God and happened to be able to spend her days together with him under one roof for a while.

If Rasanasha and Razshia would put in their utmost effort, there is no way that he would ever look at a girl like her. Even Isotta from the corps was way more fit to be standing by his side.

If it continues like this, doubtlessly other girls would take their chances and approach him. If she did not act quickly, she was sure to lose, that was what Razshia had assured her to be the unavoidable truth.

"Continue giving your best, Sun!"

Impressed with Sun's effort, and feeling the air around her change, Yuusuke cheered her with a vigorous voice and turned to leave the training grounds as to avoid disturbing girls training even more.

"Well, see you again."

"A!… yes, take care."

Unable to voice her feelings and feeling slightly down, Sun took her posture again and resumed her training.

***

"I also have to try my best."

Thought Yuusuke after leaving the open training grounds. He considered using the free time that he had now to go back to his room and practice on using his Evil God powers.

Since the talk with Sun in the carriage on their way back to Sanc Adiet he had relinquished his eagerness to become a swordsman like Shinha and instead strived to perfect his customization powers.

Thus he called the customization data made for battle to his customization screen. This was something that he did not have opportunities to improve on since he had first created it.

"Pitfalls and walls, only two of them – that isn't very good…"

For indoors battles, he only had the field that he had used on his previous mission. Moreover, the map item data was limited only to what was in his direct line of sight and that held the limitations on the usefulness of his abilities.

The problem was that all of his current abilities was defensive and he had to wait for opponent to fall for them, thus he wanted to create something that could be used to counter this weakness.

"I have to think of something."

Thus, in order to create himself a new "weapon", Yuusuke started working on a method that would allow him to use the map item data as something that could be used offensively.

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Zalnar's month of wind, nineteenth day~

Everyone was in a festive mood already. Yuusuke was in the soldier's resting room, sorting the presents that he intended to bring to everyone back at the village. He was waiting for Sun to show up and was having a pleasant chat with Fonke, who did not want to go out into the city just for the dance festival, and Shaheed, who was not going back home for the holiday, in the meantime.

"Captain is returning to the Rufk village together with Sun-chan?"

"Ah, it seems I would put Violet in a tough spot should I remain here. Also there are things that I want to discuss with the teacher."

On the other hand, this was the end of year festival so it was best to enjoy it as much as one could.

"The things that you want to discuss with Zeshald-dono are related to those evil beasts, right?"

"That's right."

Servants at the Yuusuke's mansion were also on a leave during this celebration and Razshia was left to watch over the empty building together with the steward and several of the older servants. Rashanasha, was also allowed to freely enter and leave the mansion because she was currently made responsible for cultivating the solar moss.

"Oh that reminds me, a lot of people are leaving for some other towns for the celebration. I heard that the carriage boarding place was pretty busy."

"If we don't hurry up, there might not be any comfortable carriages left for us."

"May I reserve one?" as Vermeer raised his hand towards Yuusuke, knowing that he wasn't going to use the carriage, he took his time to choose the rara fruit wine from amongst the other cheap wines. While Fonke, in a split second, prepared a cup as a support, making everyone wonder where he took out the cup from.

["Should I have reserved a carriage?"], thought Yuusuke as he waved back to Vermeer, who stood up from his seat and was motioning Yuusuke to come over to him. Having decided not to rush anymore, Yuusuke slowly approached his subordinates and presented them with a bottle high grade Rara wine, poured into a bottle that was used to contain cheap alcohol. Fonke, who was sitting with Vermeer pulled out a cup from somewhere and offered it to his captain.

Vermeer was about to ask Fonke on how could Yuusuke reach the village without a carriage, but Fonke just waved it off telling him that everything will work out because their captain will find a way.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, Yuusuke-san."

"Oh, you're here. Well, let us go then."

With Vermeer and the guys waving and wishing them a happy holiday, Yuusuke left the soldier's resting room. Sun, who had changed her clothes to a simple dress, followed Yuusuke to the carriage boarding place, as they were planning to use a simple carriage to exit the city.

Yuusuke had bent his back under the weight of the bag full of various souvenirs, and looked to be more like an old woman than a captain of a palace knight's corps. He and Sun, who was carrying two somewhat long wooden planks, attracted attention of everyone they passed in the corridor.

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"Is this place really suitable for it?"

Yuusuke and Sun passed the district gate, overlooking the tower plaza, and finally arrived at the city outskirts. There they disembarked from the carriage and thanked their driver. (Note: the carriage in previous paragraphs meant a palace carriage that they could use for themselves like rent-a-car while this carriage was more like a taxi)

"Well, let us walk until the highway."

"Yes."

When the two finally arrived at the road, leading to Rufk village, Sun finally put down the planks that she was holding until now at the side of the road so not to hinder any carriages that might be using it. Yuusuke approached the planks and used the movement type map item data and bound the two 2.5 meters long boards into a single object.

Standing up again he used the customization menu to create another thin, long plank that was around 10 meters long.

"I'll hold the luggage, Yuusuke-san."

"Oh, thanks."

Yuusuke agreed with Sun and gave her all the luggage since all of his attention had to be diverted at the customization.

Sun carelessly took all the luggage that seemed to be really heavy for Yuusuke. Although she was not wearing the ring that increased her strength, her arms were still way stronger than Yuusuke's.

"Our trip might be a little bumpy so make sure to hold your footing."

"Okay, don't worry."

"Good, then let's try using this thing."

This was the same type of customization that Yuusuke had used at the battle of the main Paula fortress. If it was used in a city like Sanc Adiet, Yuusuke could simply switch two parts of stone pavement around. It could be said that this power was a consecutive teleportation.

This time he changed a portion of the ground below the planks that he was standing on with a portion of the ground farther away. The board had instantly moved similar distance. Yuusuke called this power Map Shift. This time, he moved forward by around 10 meters.

Then he moved the small part of the foothold for the plank at the rear of his contraption forward. By doing that he returned the planks to their former length, moving around 10 meters forward in the process. Yuusuke planned to reach the Rufk village by continuously repeating this customization.

Since the original game did not have any convenient macro functions for map item customization, Yuusuke had to do continuously repeat the shifting of his makeshift scaffold and execution of the customization action. If he did not make any mistakes, he could do it once per second.

Sun was holding onto Yuusuke, standing closely behind his back white the youth was continuously performing his customization and moving them closer to the village.

["Move, execute, move, execute, move, execute, move, execute… ah I made a mistake."]

["He looks very busy, I think it's better for me to remain silent and not interrupt him."]

The hilly and uneven terrain made his trip slightly difficult, requiring him to think of a specific way to pass it, however skillful use of this technique allowed him to significantly reduce the travelling time. Standing still also meant that there was no inertia force involved thus this way of travelling was completely safe.

There was only one fault to this way of travelling – each customization involved the flickering phenomenon, making them tremendously stand out.

"Hey! I can see it. Over there!"

"Whoa! What is that?!"

"Isn't it the Hero of Deernook?"

"That light, what in the hell…"

[“Captain of the darkness God Corps and his Artless attendant, were passing through the eastern highway at a great speed, surrounded by particles of light that were fluttering in the wind.”]

Hearing the rumor that had started to spread since that day, Violet shouted “He created another type of carriage, I want to ride in it!” in the upper floor of the palace.

Chapter 64: The Dance Festival (Part 1)

"We finally arrived. As I thought, this was faster than using a knight's carriage."

"To be able to travel that fast without a carriage. It's an amazing thing!"

They only took a short rest during their trip and were able to arrive at the village early in the afternoon. The trip took them around five hours, and repeating the same task for this long was nothing to a former MMO addict like Yuusuke.

"Yuusuke-san I thought that you would come back soon."

"I'm back, Bahana-san."

"Hey~"

When she heard that Sun had been appointed as a special attendant for the Darkness God Corps, Bahana gently stoked the girl's hair, asking her to show her uniform the next time she came back home.

Because they did not use a carriage to go to the village, at first only the people that were near the village gate had noticed them. However, by the time they arrived at Zeshald's house, the news had spread throughout the entire village and everyone had gathered to greet them.

"It feels like the village has grown bigger."

"I can also see some new buildings."

"Hehe, everyone is coming to this village because of you guys. We even had entire families moving here from the other villages."

Rufk village was being treated exceptionally well due to Yuusuke's governmental services, on top of that, Zeshald also lived there. The fact that these two people who have done an exemplary service for the Kingdom of Fonclanc lived here, made the village's name resound throughout the country.

On top of that Sun, a girl that was born in this village, had been appointed to be a personal attendant to the famous Darkness God Corps. This event had even drawn the attention of the neighboring countries.

"Well, this has not created any problems until now, I think it's a good thing that things have gotten busy around here."

"That's true."

Looking at the new buildings that have been erected at a site that had previously been a part of the forest, Yuusuke understood that this place had also slowly started to change. He reminisced about an empty field in which he used to play as a kid and how that field was completely gone by the time he entered middle school.

It was much harder to notice in a big city, but here it was easy to see that more people meant development, which further attracted even more people. He thought that when

he returned to the village after another half of a year, instead of bringing souvenirs for everyone in the village he would only buy a bottle of alcohol for the people who were closest to him.

"The growth of the village means a weakening of the bonds between everyone, eh?"

"Yuusuke-san?"

Sun bent her head, puzzled by what Yuusuke had silently said. Her captain responded with a careless smile and turned towards Zeshald's house.

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"I'm home, teacher."

"Oh, long time no see."

"Mhm, glad to see you back."

"…welcome back."

"Welcome…"

Zeshald looked healthy as usual when he emerged from the doorframe along with Belushya and Elfiona, the former dressed up in her maid uniform, while the latter was wearing a simple village dress. Elfiona looked completely different from before and could easily pass for a shy child of her age.

With the day of the festival at hand, the village was bustling with everyone preparing for the occasion. Amongst them there were even some brave men that openly declared that they would go for Belushya during the festival. Moreover, they were not the villagers but the knights that were stationed here to protect it.

"Speaking about that, a lot had happened during the harvest festival."

"Ata! It sure was a busy night."

"…Yeah."

Yuusuke remembered that Sun was attacked by Thalys, who was supposed to be her childhood friend, while Yuusuke, in the meantime, was assaulted by a swarm of village girls. These memories made him feel somewhat miserable.

"Are you prepared to protect Sun this time?"

Standing before a laughing Zeshald, Yuusuke felt tense as if he were standing before Sun's father.

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Afterwards, the evening had come in a breath. Yuusuke was talking with Zeshald about the evil beast incident and asking for his opinion.

"Hmm, the evil beasts that you described and the man, who tried to sell the evil beasts to Blue Garden, seem to be related. Doesn't that feel strange to you?"

"Isn't there a possibility of several groups being involved in the breeding of the evil beasts?"

"Or possibly there is a single main group that controls several smaller ones?"

"Ah! I get it, Can the group be testing various methods to sell their beasts?"

If the way to breed the evil beasts that Yuusuke's party saw in the forest was practiced for a while, it would have been natural for the damage reports and missing people reports to start appearing much earlier. Since the damage reports had started just a short while ago, this did not seem likely.

"Still, that did not look to be natural."

Zeshald pointed out an even more unsettling possibility – the beasts might not have been bred for selling, they might have been bred as part of an experiment. The nest might have been placed there to create enough damage to warrant an investigation party that could be used to test out the battle capabilities of these beasts.

"Hmm, no matter how we put it, this situation…"

Yuusuke was remembering feeling similar emotions in a game he had played before.

"…"

"What's wrong?"

Belushya noticed that Elfiona seemed to want to say something and called out to her. The girl remembered that she had heard some researchers talking about such evil beasts during her training as a child assassin in the institution.

"So Nossentes is involved in this after all."

"It's an old country. It's not surprising that they had a lot of things going on."

Suddenly Yuusuke wanted to try asking Gazzetta if they had any information of such a research group existing within former Nossentes. Zeshald agreed to the proposal on the basis that Gazzetta might provide the requested information as a mean of attracting the attention of the Evil God – a figure they held great interest in.

"I will try talking this over with Violet after the holiday."

"That's right, let's avoid making conclusions without gathering sufficient information first."

With this, Zeshald had ended the discussion regarding the evil beasts.

"We have talked for a long time, I think it's best for us to go rest tonight."

"Yeah."

Tomorrow evening the festival will start and the dancing will begin on the next day. It was a good idea to go to sleep early tonight.

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"Good, I'll somehow make it in time for the Dance festival."

Twentieth day of Zalnar's month of wind, the day before the dance festival. A young man was on Fonclanc's highway, going northwards towards Rufk village.

"But isn't that girl living in Sanc Adiet now. If she doesn't come back home for the festival, our trip here will be wasted."

"Don't worry. Zeshald-sensei is also in the village. There is no way that she would miss such an opportunity and stay in the capital."

The young man insisted that she was not the type of girl that would forget the people that looked after her in the village once she had grown accustomed to the life in the city. His slightly older companion nodded in reply.

"Is that so? As expected of a childhood friend. You really know her well."

He still had an appearance of a young man, but the calmness that was felt in his demeanor showed that he was a man in the prime of his life. The duo had white hair, denoting them being Artless. Under their simple capes, they were wearing white armor and a helmet.

"I'm going to meet you soon, Sun."

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The village guards were also helping with the preparations for the dance festival. They were moving tables and chairs to the main village square and to the other open areas. Everywhere in the main square, people that had decided on who to confess to could be seen showing their love to their counterparts.

Those that had already decided on their partners could be seen walking around while holding their hands as if to say "We're a couple." Occasionally, a person choosing one of the several partners trying to confess to him or her could also be seen.

It was that kind of event where one could unexpectedly find a partner or could unexpectedly remain alone. There were also men who tried to seduce multiple women by simultaneously proposing to two or three girls – these kind of guys were doing it to gain attention, like actors on the stage.

["Of course I want a lover, but I just can't choose one."] The dance festival was an especially important festivity for these kind of men and women.

"Phew, with this the decorations are finished."

"Good work."

Bahana, who was in charge for overseeing the decorations of the main square, breathed a sigh of relief. She now amused herself by chatting with two other people while overlooking the final preparations of several other places.

"Will you be in charge for the meat this time again, aunt Bahana?"

"No~ I'll be in charge of delivering the alcohol this time."

She took the job of distributing the alcohol over the tables that were spread over the entire village so she could eavesdrop on the lovers' chat and give a few tips. Her responsibilities also included scouting out any potential trouble. Bahana's reasoning was that the dance festival this year would be much bigger than usual.

This year, the village's population had spiked, this included some of the knights who were stationed in the village, and had gotten close to the villagers. In addition, several of the knights were even targeting Belushya.

"Hmm. But Belushya reveres Zeshald, doesn't she?"

"Ahahaha. She does, for sure. It will be a festival of defeat for them."

Laughed Bahana and continued as she spotted a small figure restlessly walking around a bundle of flowers that were decorating a corner of the square:

"In two or three years Elfiona will also be of suitable age. I am looking forward to that."

Elfiona, who was being looked at warmly by the other adults, suddenly froze, staring at an alleyway that was so small that it could barely even be called by that.

"Is something wrong, Elfi?"

Noticing the unusual behavior of the girl, Bahana had called out to her. Elfiona continued staring at the alley and only said a single word as she pointed her finger towards it.

"Soldiers, two of them."

A rustling sound could be heard from the direction that the girl was pointing to. Suddenly, a grumbling voice, that was approaching them, could be heard.

"I didn't think that there would be soldiers around. It's a good thing that this place has not changed."

"It's because this village had also been through a lot, however some loopholes still remain."

"Eh? Thalys?"

Thalys had emerged in the village square after evading the defensive net of the knights, protecting the village, by going through the small alleyways between the buildings. He often used these alleys since he was a kid. After a minute, another tall Artless had emerged behind him.

While everyone was standing dumbfounded, Thalys had noticed Sun and, with a cheerful expression, had ran towards her.

"Sun! To see you so soon after returning. It must be fate for us t—"

As he spread his arms widely to embrace the girl, Bahana suddenly stood in his way.

"Elfi, call teacher and everyone else. Make haste!"

"Nhn"

Bahana urged the little girl while her back was turned towards Sun. Elfiona gave a quick affirmation and dashed towards Zeshald's house. As expected, being trained to be an assassin from a very young age, her physical capabilities were not just for show – she ran through a crowd of people like she would be running through an empty field.

"Bahana-san, please stand aside."

"You, what reason did you come back here for?"

"To greet Sun, of course."

"Whaaa?"

Upon leaving for Gazzetta, Thalys spent his time training to become a soldier. He had learned various things about the world, met various people, and with that he managed to become a little bit more mature. Naturally, he managed to subdue his habit of going after every woman.

At first he continued seducing women even after his defection to Gazzetta, but gradually he got over this urge and started to seriously think about choosing his lifelong partner. It was then that he noticed that Sun had everything that he envisioned in his picture of an ideal woman.

"So, you were aiming for the dance festival so you could kidnap her?"

"I was in a hurry so I would reach the village in time for the dance festival."

Hearing the two talk, villagers started gossiping loudly. Knights could also be seen rushing into the main square. While Bahana was talking with the young man, who was seemingly from this village, the other Artless was warily inspecting his surroundings.

"Sun, let's go to Gazzetta together."

"I don't want to."

Sun's reply was instantaneous. However that was within Thalys' expectations. Without flinching he started to try to persuade Sun, telling her about the wonderful life in Gazzetta – a country ruled by the Artless. The artless soldier standing with his arms crossed behind his partner silently nodded to everything that he said.

"Sun!"

"Ohoho, little Thalys and an artless soldier."

At that time Elfiona returned with Belushya, Yuusuke and Zeshald in tow. The crowd had parted at the entrance of the young Hero of Fonclanc and the old, frail looking former Royal Divine Arts Instructor, and had allowed them to pass freely to the center of the square.

"Yuusuke-san! Teacher!"

Sun rushed to Yuusuke's side and hid behind the black uniform of the captain of the Darkness God Corps, just like she hid behind Zeshald's back some time ago. Thalys face twitched seeing Sun behave like this and he turned towards Yuusuke while maintaining

his dignified attitude.

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“Hmm, it does not look like another plot of King Shinha.”

“This time I had returned here on my own decision, teacher.”

Yuusuke had managed to grasp the situation from Bahana and the way that Thalys acted. His return to Fonclanc and even bringing a White Clan (Artless) soldier with him seemed to be done on the whim of youthful love.

The propaganda promise of an easy life for an Artless in Gazzetta was well within Zeshald’s expectations so he had just the right response for the guy.

“Despite all the energy you put into the persuasion, wasn’t Sun’s answer clear enough for you?”

“I understand the reasons.” (T.N. I don’t know if this meant His or her reasons.)

[Isn’t it better just to give up?] Intimidated by this implication, hidden in Zeshald’s words, the newcomer suddenly turned to Yuusuke and pointed at him, directing the blame towards the black haired youth.

“I heard it on the way here. You had dragged out Sun into a dangerous battle, didn’t you?”

“Eh? No, that’s…”

“Since you made Sun join the military, she will eventually bloody her hands. I would have never made her do such a thing.”

“It was something that I had to do…”

Interrupting Yuusuke’s attempt to explain the circumstances regarding Sun becoming a special attendant of the Darkness God Corps, Thalys challenged the Hero of Fonclanc to a duel.

“Let us settle the matter of who is most fit to be with Sun with this. I will be the one to protect her!”

The ‘crowd had exploded with cheers. Thalys, who had become a Gazzetta soldier, had challenged the captain of the Darkness God Corps with Sun as a prize. The dance festival was the appropriate time for such conflicts thus the crowd was looking forward to entertain themselves.

“You were such a kind of a man?”

“Eee, Eh…”

“What a letdown, I expected to see the true power of Yuusuke with my own eyes.”

“Not you too, aunt Bahana.”

When she first saw Thalys, Bahana was very wary of him, but seeing how much the

time he spent in Gazzetta had changed him and how he had returned to the village solely because of Sun, she could not help herself but to slightly admire him.

It seemed that Bahana tended to enjoy these kind of situations.

["Well, even if Thalys would win, Sun would still choose Yuusuke in the end."]

Preparing for their duel tomorrow, a part of the already decorated village square was currently being remodeled to be suitable for a fight.

"Belushya, can you have the healing potions prepared by tomorrow."

"…Yes."

Tomorrow was to be the day of the dance festival. Zeshald decided that since there seemed to be no political implications in the challenge, he would remain a spectator of the fight between the two young men. For now he was occupied with preparing the healing supplies and his house to heal the two that would probably injure each other tomorrow.

"It's sure nice to be young."

Chapter 65: The Dance Festival (Part 2)

Daybreak, the very same day~~

At once, Yuusuke had transmitted his message to the soldiers stationed at Rufk. Thalys's group was visiting from Gazzetta, and Violet who understands the personal circumstances surrounding Sun, bestowed the words "go kick some ass!".

"Seems very Violet-like…"

"Hohoho today's the day of the dance festival, some sightseers have come."

Likely consenting to Zeshald's words, Yuusuke was preparing himself for the duel as he headed towards the plaza. As it seems, lots of villagers and soldiers had gathered, and as Yuusuke appeared in sight, cheers of excitement began to flood the area.

Sun was dressed in a costume which was covered with feathers as her role was to congratulate the winner, while Bahana was sitting on a location which overlooked the entire arena of the duel.

On the other end of the arena, Thalys was dressed in a white training soldier's armor, as it seems that he had listened to the advice and was clad in the artless warrior armor. Directing his line of sight towards Yuusuke entering the arena, he returned the words of the artless with occasional nods.

Yuusuke had a mountain pile of timber on his area of the field while facing an opened customization screen. Earlier this week he had been toying with the map item data and had already checked whether it was possible for him to use the timber.

"Ng, with this it should be alright."

In the first place, he could only customized the materials of the ground which was linked to his feet for battle, thus for safety precautions he had prepared these materials before hand. Unknown whether the battle will turn to his favor, he had prepared the data of the familiar barriers and pitfall he had usually used.

"Are both of you ready! If so, please proceed to the center!"

After hearing the voice of the MC, Yuusuke and Thalys walked towards the center of the arena, while the MC announced their names and titles to the audience. (TL notes: WTF WWE?)

On this side, the name everyone in Fonclanc would have heard before, the one who is also known as the hero of Deernook, the Darkness God Corps Captain, Yuusuke. And on the other side, an artless apprentice warrior borned from this very village of Rufk, currently under Gazzetta's white cavalry training soldiers, Thalys.

The current situation which the masses know was a dispute concerning Sun who was appointed as an exclusive servant to the Darkness God Crops, as the youth's childhood friend an unnamed apprentice warrior challenges the Hero of Deernook.

The arena of the duel, the square, was currently full of heated crowds thus the event is worthy of being known as the dance festival.

The rules are not dealing a mortal wound. Listening to the instructions of the referee. The match will be settled when either one of them loses consciousness. After receiving the information, both of them back into their own corners.

After Yuusuke returned to his side of the arena, he began tampering with his opened customization menu of the battle map item data and peeped at the screen of the stats of his opponent Thalys. It seems that Thalys was using a greatsword due to his build, thus his technique was to bunt and win in one swing.

Within the timber that Yuuske had prepared, he had craved some of them yesterday. Although they are made of wood, it is still considerably heavy.

"....ah, somehow it feels like deja vu, your stance is some what similar to Shinha."

"I respect Shinha's-sama strength, that's why I had applied to join the white cavalry."

During the Gazzetta's army selections for the talented, as he did not have any combat experience, he was placed to be trained under the novice group of the white cavalry. It was during one of the training sessions, he became attracted to passionate swordplay which Shinha had displayed, thus he aspired to enter the white cavalry.

"Don't hold back, Yuusuke. After winning over you, Sun will understand my earnest convictions."

"Hmm, I believe it won't turn out that way though…."

Thalys was rather spirited as he wielded a greatsword which was similar in style to Shinha's, while Yuusuke seems halfhearted and unwilling as he raised one of his hands aloft while half of his body was taking up stance.

This is the usual style of Yuusuke, the audiences could see that the Hero of Deernook is showing his "composure" to his opponent.

"Thalys~! He's looking down on you, get fired up~!"

"Show the hero you could blow him away!"

From the situation, the promise of jeers had followed. Yuusuke seems to be getting more and more unmotivated unlike his opponent, Thalys was giving off an aura from his body. "The Darkness God captain seems weak against close combat, so try to close the distance," an advice was given to him.

"The moment it starts, dive straight towards him!"

"Na moh~~, that Yuusuke…..this is about Sun's happiness, why can't he be fired up?"

Bahana was watching the 2 from the special seat as she sighed at Yuusuke being unmotivated.

"Yuusuke will be fine, most likely."

"Sun, how does Yuusuke normally fights?"

"Erm…, technically I am not sure…"

"....you trust Yuusuke too much to have no sense of danger…"

While Sun was playing with the feathery costume, Bahana was sighing.

"Start!"

Along with the declaration of the referee, the fabric which marked the start was swung. At the same time, Thalys jumped out with such a huge force, like an arrow shot out of a bow. Despite being equipped with a greatsword and in full armor made for training soldiers, he was rushing at a tremendous speed.

The basic training for swordplay/fencing starts from the legs. Since it's also his homeground which he is familiar with, Thalys was able to go all out.

The distance between Thalys and Yuusuke was roughly around 10 meters, the moment of the start signal Thalys had covered half the distance.

In order to finish this peacefully, for the time being Yuusuke started by creating a pitfall barrier through his customization menu, with that amount of vigor one would tend to be careless and make a mistake.

"Ah, I made a mistake."

By looking away for a moment, he accident closed the map item data for the pitfalls, thus the scheduled barriers of pitfalls and the soil/earth? materials became unusable.

A forward thrust was incoming from Thalys. As a last resort, Yuusuke began running the schedule of map item data type 2 for the battle. The timber that was piled up behind Yuusuke disappeared in a beam of light. At the same time, a giant humanoid appeared.

"Wh….at!"

Like it was growing from the ground a full body plate armor emerged, the height from the head was around 8 meters. It looked like the upper body of a giant.

Shock by the sudden appearance of a armored giant, Thalys came to a halt, seeing the giant raised its arms, he retreated back. It was the basics of anti-divine arts warfare. No matter how powerful the divine art attack, as long as it can be avoided the divine arts warriors are no match for the artless warriors.

Seeing Yuusuke using his divine arts to move the giant, he determine that Yuusuke would not be able to attack.

"That is a massive thing, it's movement should be dull! I shouldn't get hit from it."

Thalys kicked the ground as he goes in for the kill before the arms of the armored giant that it had swung down. In an instant, a tremendous shock which knocks his body consciousness away as he was sent flying .

While he was in flight waiting to slam back down to the ground, during that time the upper half of the armored giant chest disappeared leaving light particles behind and a barrier appeared around Yuusuke.

"That was dangerous~"

Yuusuke exhaled in relief as part of the armored giant, which was customized into a barrier, was in placed.

The armored giant had a gimmick function which was a set of 3 stage attack combos, a left and right punch followed by a hammer drop, although it may look dull on the surface the attack rate to execute the entire combo was roughly around 3 seconds.

In that instant, Yuusuke determined that it wasn't too late, he switched the gimmick OFF, converted part of the armored giant which was configured as timber into the barrier data materials and deployed it.

The 3rd stage of the first combo, the hammer had blown Thalys away and it should be a life threatening injury.

It seems that the unleashing of a huge golem to counter the quick play attack have caused the artless warriors, Thalys companions, to be dumbfounded with a stunned look. Eru (Elfiona) expressionless pupils/eyes began to sparkle as she watched the match from the corner of the arena.

"As expected he was still able to surprise us…."

Zeshald immediately rushed to heal Thalys, although there were those golem that were created by the soil/earth divine arts user to use for transportation, non of them were seen to be able to make a move such as human hand to hand combat.

However, Yuusuke was speaking in a low tone, perhaps it would be better if he had created the armored giant closer to the soil/earth divine arts golems, as he then recited "type 2 specs".

"Seems like there is still many problems that remains for this type 2"

Although the armored giant had shown its smooth movement, in reality it was made to repeat a fixed and specified gimmick function, thus it is not aware of the opponent's attack and only support frontal attacks.

One could easily get out of it's attack range and take the roundabout path. In that situation, it will induce the opponent to use a barrier, thus he have to create a more flexible armored giant which could change it's angle to address this problem.

Unable to differentiate enemy or friendly, it's not very versatile for tactical attacks and is only for long distance attacks. Wholly, used as a surprise attack, it's appearance had seemed to make an impact followed by the combo hit attack which throws the person off their pace. One could say that it's a "moving paper model". (TL notes: 動く張りぼて go google this and you will understand)

Being blown away by that "moving paper model" Thalys was currently on the stretcher being healed and carried away by the villagers whom were in charge. (TL note: … I just realised, One punch man?....)

"How is it?"

"Hmmm, bruises and abrasions. There wasn't any big injuries."

Well everything turned out alright, and after Yuusuke saw off Thalys who was being carried towards Zeshald's house, he turned back and look towards the grandstand at the arena.

"Hey, it's time to go over."

"N,ng."

Bahana prompted Sun and she stood up from her seat. Being the congratulatory girl she walked up to the winner to crown him with the feathery crown. As the crowd suddenly remembered about the winner, they began giving their generous applause.

Once again by feeling the Darkness God Corps Captain, Yuuske's power, up close, he had gained a recognition that "it's impossible for there to be 2 heroes appearing" from the villagers and the soldiers stationed at Rufk, thus it was also engraved on the hearts of the artless warriors and the apprentices.

Seeing Yuusuke scratch his head in response to the cheers from everyone, Bahana looked into the distance as she became relieved.

Early morning of the second day of the dance festival~~

Motivated to train himself even more Thalys had left his birthplace. On the road back to Gazzetta, he was thinking about the parting words that Zeshald had left him with last night.

Thalys who had regained consciousness on the bed in Zeshald's mansion is disappointed in his ability which could not compete with the Divine Arts of Yuusuke. Even so, he could not take the fact that Sun was a civilian under military employment by Yuusuke.

As Zeshald came to check on his recovery, Thalys began to confide to him about the things he had kept in his heart, as expected he had the same trust and respect towards Zeshald who had helped him since a young age like Sun.

"Certainly Yuusuke's power is unimaginable, but….I cannot accept that. For Sun's sake, if only I can put out more power the next time~~"

"Hmm. But Thalys, have you thought about Sun's feelings?"

In the end, the thought for the welfare of Sun was just Thalys desire, as it was pointed out that he was imposing his feelings onto her.

"Well, it's understandable that we would not want Sun to participate in a battle."

Without being forced to step into this harsh and dangerous world, even though there

were many other ways to stand by Yuusuke, but she have chosen to become a member of the Darkness God Corps to be beside Yuusuke, this was her own will, the answer that she came up.

She denied to be content with her protection. Thus Yuusuke responded with respect to that feeling.

“So who do you think considered about Sun’s situation?”

“....”

Without a clear answer, Thalys smolder his thoughts in his chest, as he venture down south on the dim Fonclanc’s highway.

Due to the first day’s duel event which blew through the atmosphere of the dance festival, the second day became a full fledged courtship day. In the central venues of the village, the young men and women were carried into a momentum battle of confessing to their crushes with “Please marry me!”

Since yesterday, Sun and Yuusuke had became the official couple of Rufk village, the story was that a brave soul had challenge the Hero of Deernook, but Yuusuke was able to brush away the confident person who approach Sun defiantly, thus the 2 people were able to spend their quiet time together.

However, the honorably defeated, those who were tied, the interchanging mixed feelings were raging like a violent storm within the village. While the two of them headed out for a stroll in the forest where they first met at the false/evil god’s shrine.

“This feeling of reminiscence…..”

It seems that someone from the village has taken over the duty of caring for the shrine as the properly lit fire proved. Heading into the stone chamber, Yuusuke was filled with strong emotions as he indulged in looking at the paintings on the ceiling.

“That reminds me, I haven’t thanked Sun.”

“For?”

Sun began blushing as she recalled when she first met a naked Yuusuke who was exiting the shrine while she was heading there to place an offering as it reminds her of the symbol of the false god.

“Normally this kind of situation should be in reverse.”

Seeing Sun blushed, realising what she had remembered, Yuusuke began laughing to conceal his embarrassment.

“Reverse?”

“No, usually this kind of happenings shouldn’t it be the guys that accidentally stumbles on naked girls….”

"....Yuusuke-san, is perverted."

"Why!"

The burning flame gently sway while giving off a warm soft light in the stone chamber, as echoes of laughter between the 2 person could be heard. A sudden pause between the voices, next from the silence, Sun who was sitting on stone pedestal began to speak.

"....do, you wanna...see…?"

"eh"

Sun rest both her hands onto her chest, she glance up as she leaned forward while her face turned red while saying.

"Do...do you want….to see my body?"

"....."

For a moment the words coming out from Yuusuke was jammed as he wonder how to react and respond to Sun's words that were directed to him from the front while ever so slightly turning his head to a different angle.

"Is this, again by Ra~~"

"This is not because of what Razshia-san said!"

The sudden strong outburst from Sun echoed through the stone chamber causing Yuusuke to shut his mouth.

"I, I just consulted with her. On what I can do to get rid of Yuusuke-san's awkwardness/shyness…."

"I….."

Yuusuke became confused by the unexpected confession. Like a old father, Yuusuke was resistant to cat women, however this was the first time a girl came crashing towards him with her earnest feelings that he didn't have experiences of.

Yuusuke's silence was regarded as rejection, thus Sun muttered in a sorrowful tone.

"As I thought….someone like me, couldn't fit to be….. Yuusuke's companion?"

"No, there isn't such thing! It's not that….how do I put it."

The situation where he is known as the evil god. He isn't a man originally from this world. The legends that "leads to apocalypse and destruction of the world." Due to these reasons, Yuusuke explain why he was hesitant to have a favorite person or go into a deep relationship with someone.

"Someday there might be a chance that I might just disappear, who knows…."

Thinking about the people that will be left behind, thus he had decided not to build close relationship with them in order not to hurt them.

"....of course, Yuusuke-san is somewhat different."

"I wonder."

"No matter what, we will all disappear one day….all the more, everyone would try to leave something as proof that they had live."

"Hmm, the generation and place that I was being brought up in doesn't have such strong feelings of doing so."

As he placed his fingers on his chin, Yuusuke was thinking about the values of the thing that he had felt in his original world, what was in the present/modern day…. suddenly his conscious was being brought back by the rustling of clothes. The thing that came jumping into his vision was Sun's white naked and glossy body down from the shoulders.

"Sun….?"

"From that huge tower, to the fortress….Yuusuke-san traces have been left, in the near future I believe that you will leave even more traces across this world."

Sun's being relief is known as her breathing became lighter was being projected by her shadow that was being illuminated by the swaying light.

"Please engrave….traces of Yuusuke-san…..on me too."

Being stark naked Sun was shyly facing downwards while looking straight into Yuusuke's eyes as her body was waiting in anticipation for him.

In the evening, the two headed back to the village.

"I'm really sorry for being weak-willed…."

"Mou It's alright, you don't have to worry so much."

A genuinely pathetic atmosphere seems to permeate from Yuusuke, while Sun was giggling and walking beside him as she tries to comfort him with gentle words.

In the end, the great hero of Deernook broke the temptation of Sun with his bleeding nose and he collapsed, out of all the possible outcome. Yuusuke was depressed, although Sun didn't seem to mind.

The results of confession after her giving her all, although there was blood it was in a different sense, at least, by using her bare skin, it seems that Yuusuke was proved to be reachable. Thus Sun began to have a little confidence in her attractiveness as a women.

"I'm sure, there will still be many opportunities."

"Hahaha….ha…"

As expected of a warrior based clan, Yuusuke's day are numbered.

During that same time, within Zeshald’s mansion.

“How’s the feeling, is it weak?”

“....the back, a little lower….”

“Fumu, here?”

“....yes…..”

The energetic ero-geezer and the melted ice-girl were flirting (engrossed in each other).

Chapter 66: Shadow of disaster

Fifth day of the fire month of Fyolnar.

In the upper floors of Volance palace, the joyful laughter of Violet could be heard in the morning.

"Bwahahahahaha"

"Sun…."

"I~I'm sorry."

Yuusuke had a nosebleed and fainted due to Sun's seduction which was then found out by Violet. Currently he had become a laughingstock due to that event.

As the dance festival and vacation was over, Sun and Yuusuke had arrived back at his mansion in Sanc Adiet yesterday night and had reassumed their corps duty today.

Earlier this morning, as they were reporting to the palace for work, they were pestered by Violet who wanted to hear the story about what happened during the duel. As it was the day for distributing the next set of divine arts rings, since Sun was the one watching the duel from the special seat, Yuusuke asked her to explain to Violet and went to the resting rooms of the palace corps to deliver the rings by himself.

When he saw Hivodir taking a break in the resting room, he wondered about Violet's reaction to hearing about the dance festival, by the time he had returned, the story had progressed to the events that had happened in the evil god shrine.

"But, I~see. It wasn't because Yuusuke was dull after all."

Grasping the meaning behind the events, Violet rubbed her side.

"Rather than that, what about the previous topic?"

For the time being, Yuusuke was trying to put in the effort to change the topic. As it was for the modified beast research, Yuusuke proposal was to go on a trip to find information on the research organization in former Nossentes and Gazzetta.

"Ah~for that…. I have to consult with my father first, thus it will have to wait till tomorrow."

"Okay, please go ahead with it."

"As expected. What will Gazzetta do from now, it still isn't clear...don't look down on that man."

Yuusuke's proposal to directly go to Gazzetta caused Violet to frown, it seems that his proposal was in agreement with King Esvosbus's decision to draw out information from Gazzetta. ~~ Yuusuke's effort had seemingly paid off.

The Central tower, Patrucia Nost~~

"Inquires from Blue Garden?"

The letter was sent in the name of Queen Risha, within the letter, it wants to pursue on the crimes made by the ex-supreme officer on a pretext of magical beast research within the research organisation of the former Nossentes, to discover whether such a thing had existed.

Shinha presumed that the letter from Blue garden was in fact asked by Fonclanc's side as he based off the recent incidents that had occurred near the borders of Trent Rietta and Fonclanc, thus Ayuukas nodded in agreement to his theory. And it seems that he was right.

In the end, Yuusuke's trip to Gazzetta was being shelved and Fonclanc's royal family adopted the plan to attempt to contact Gazzetta through Queen Risha.

The reason, to bet on the close personal relationship Queen Risha and King Shinha had shared.

"If they're looking for information about the modified beast, please don't use this kind of tactic…"

"Is it possible to be taught to other researchers?"

"No, the informations was being held back. However, it seem to have stirred up agitation instead."

"Hoho, this kid Shin is also being troubled about it."

The village seer Ayuukas hit Shinha for the bad move he made, exposing his immature acts and making fun of him being like how he was during his youth days, being referred to as a kid, Shinha made an unpleasant face.

"....anyways, how long will you be staying here old lady. Quickly return to the village."

"My house is here."

Once upon a time, this village seer had been living in Patrucia Nost, as she said that she fluttered her hands in the air and went out for a stroll in the sky garden. Sending her off , Shinha wonders how many years have passed for this old lady who treats all the people around her like kids.

"On the front it might seem like that, but it seems a little more convincing is needed...:"

Shinha was sighing as he was writing a reply letter.

"Risha-sama, we have received a letter from Gazzetta's King……..."

"Letter?"

Rishause received Gazzetta's response to the inquiry regarding the research institution of the former Nossentes. The contents in the letter could have been summarised "We

have some information, but prefered to not spread it around."

Rather than a formal letter, it was delivered in the form of a personal letter from King Shinha, as it seems that the inquiry made by Risha this time was a request by King Esvosbus was found out.

"....? I wonder what does this means."

A mysterious message was affixed at the corner of the letter, "to prepare for the return of the apocalypse."

The contents of the letter were immediately reported to Fonclanc, the bureaucrats of Volance palace realised that Shinha knew about the modified beasts but was deciding to keep that information to himself, as they wondered whether Gazzetta was planning to use these modded beasts as weapons or not? This was the question on the minds of a great number of people.

But, what should they do about Gazzetta's hostilities, thus a few split opinions occurred.

"Like I said we should organize a punitive force! Before it's too late, we should strike Gazzetta before they build up their army!

"It would not be best to aggravate them, Gazzetta went to great lengths and pain to acquire that country, they would not want to see war and invasion before their very eyes."

"Yea. The Artless were just reclaiming their land, why would you want us to send our divine arts people to go through all that trouble. When we already are putting all our efforts on improving this country."

"Isn't that too easy-going!"

The war faction wants the subjugation of Gazzetta as they believe that the mystery of the message was an advance notice of an attack on a Divine arts nations. The destruction of Nossentes was a disaster for the Divine Arts user society, and they are suggesting that these modded beasts might cause another major disaster.

Although the pacifist faction agrees on the interpretation of "Disaster", they believe that Gazzetta is warning them through their "reply", from now on to anticipate the victims of these modded beast.

Without a doubt these divine arts researchers have created modded beasts that were a threat to divine arts users. Previously, the Blue Garden saboteurs have released the prototype beast into ranches owned by Fonclanc, and the irony that the event seems to have served as a warning.

Within the war faction, there were extremists who believe that these barbarian artless are without any upbringing and so they couldn't possibly to show such humane actions. While the pacifist faction believe they have underestimated and criticised Gazzetta.

However, the artless having no culture and recognising that they know there is a lack of culture in the artless, Zeshald's disciples had pointed it out and criticise.

As the debate of the mystery messages rages on within the bureaucrats, Zeshald had gotten hold of the contents of the message from Reifold's intel network and it seems that he had a different interpretation.

"King Shinha….he seems to know quite a lot about the Evil God of disaster."

Somewhere in Gazzetta within the village of the White clan, there was a consolidation of 3000 years of history records about the evil god.

Once, Shinha had mentioned to Yuusuke in front of the walls of Puala, Gazzetta's opinion on the Evil god was that they were "prepared for the recurrence of the disaster", thus Zeshald was wondering what he had meant. Was the history of Kalticio similar to the current situation?

"The recurrence of the disaster" one would normally point and think to be the evil god, or perhaps it indicates the modded beast. The former was a suggested motive to awaken Yuusuke as the evil god, thus all the more one should avoid letting Yuusuke go to Gazzetta.

The latter, during the reign of the past evil god who had descended, it implies the existences of such modded beast.

"The white clan, the era of the prospering Artless what kind of world was it….?"

Ninth day of the fire month of Fyolnar.

"As I thought it would be difficult."

"Un...I believe the circumstances seems to be alright, but is it because we're missing something?"

In the created cultivation facility located in the basement of Yuusuke's mansion. Razshia was currently in the middle of advancing the cultivation of the solar moss and it seems that she had reached the limit for the current step.

"The tree that the moss clings onto is the key, I will need to take a trip to Trent Rietta."

"....could we get an excuse to go on a trip?"

"Surprise!"

"Haha well, let's just ask Violet."

Yuusuke and Razshia were being completely frank between themselves, as it was just their easy-going style.

As It was time for him to head to Sorzak's shop, although Razshia should be considerate about Yuusuke's appearance and humble herself when she talks to him whenever they are outside of the mansion, however, there doesn't seem to be a gap between the inside and outside of her words, as she felt that Yuusuke reminded her of her dear family.

To Yuusuke, Sun and Violet are of a different importance from Razshia.

"Hmm, It's okay if it's Trent Rietta."

"I see. Alright time to go prepare."

The modded beast scandal in Trent Rietta is beginning to fade, thus the trip to Trent Rietta was easily given the OK.

For now, the Darkness God Corps will go the the production area for the solar moss, the sister city of Trent Rietta "Driardria", the mission was to research on the tree that the solar moss cling onto. This time, other than the attendant, Sun, Razshia will be going too as the research assistant.

"I will be anticipating on the creation of the Rin lamp."

"If the cultivation succeed, we could replace the lighting of the palace with Rin lamps."

"Ooh! I will be looking forward to it."

Today, Violet was testing the motorized vehicle in the training ground, as she was smiling happily and looking forward to the souvenir she requested from Driardria.

In the seas of trees of Trent Rietta. Where the creeper vines and vegetations thrive, one white rock stands out. At one glance, it looks just like a normal rock in the seas of tree, and from this rock that is standing out an armed divine art user whose shadow could be seen in a defensive stance.

"Soon it should be time for the change in shift."

"Ahh, finally I can eat some decent food."

"I currently can't hold it anymore….I would eat anything, even their meat.."

"That kind of thing could get some use to you know, become accustomed to."

A natural cave which was turned into a underground research facility with some work. In this place living things were being developed to become weapons, currently a special kind of drug is being researched.

In the beginning, it was a facility to clinically test new drugs on the human body, unintentionally they began to use the captured beasts for trials and to see if they were able to refine a new kind of drug, during these experiments, these drugs were administered to the magical beasts thus endowing them with some unique abilities.

The researchers who discovered this, more or less continued their experiments and research on it. They worked out a simple way to hypnotise the beast allowing them to give it simple commands. But as it was out of the facilities' scope of research, they had to fund this research from their own pockets in order to continue.

There was a period of time where they were in need of money in order to continue

funding their research, thus they approached an illegal merchant to sell their product, and they sold the beast soldier model secretly to the neighbouring country.

Due to the destruction of their original country, during the time of escape, they gathered every machine, funds, and research data they could get and went into confinement, they then began their everyday research with the aim of completing the "Magical beast soldiers".

Without a place to return to as their homeland was destroyed and the inhumane research they have done, they themselves realised that they would not be recognized. In that case, in order for them to survive, they had decided to secure a place and food for themselves.

Powerful magical beast soldiers, modded beast reseach and development, these people who lost their country decided to gamble their faith on the "project".

Being released from the tradition and formalities of reporting to the Divine council, in order to acquire more funds, they had heeded the illegal merchant's advice to go under a new leader, thus removing any remaining ethics they had and immerse themselves into their research.

In a sturdy cell that rivals the room of magical beast research facility, in the corner where the eyes could make out, a grumbling and muttering of a member in charge of the assortment of drugs was being called out by his colleague.

"Oi, let's go have some food."

"This is…...ah….I will come immediately….the experimental specimen…..it's brain is degenerating….."

This researcher was tasked with the job of researching why there was an abnormality with wild reared modded beast.

20 days earlier in the scheduled reports, in a certain nest which was in range, something had attacked the modded beasts, during that time, the nest was set on fire, but for some reason they didn't move away from it.

As a last resort, they sent an order to the modded beast using a "magical flute" to attack the adventurer group which had set fire to the nest, but they had the tables turn against them when the group had used a bow user which countered the divine art obstruction disorder.

Thus these countless days, he had been pulling an all nighter and answering in a muttering tone, seeing that, his colleague gave up and headed alone to the dining hall. Still tinkering with the modded drugs for use on the magical beast, he took no notice on the door shutting behind him.

"Ah"

To acquire such a poor quality container even though there were sufficient research funds, the container dropped and scattered onto the bed. Luckily, he was able to gather enough of the liquid drug's contents avoid having to remake it . However, that was just

the only lucky thing that happened.

“As long as there is still this, using water to dilute the solution would pose no problems” slowly losing his ability to think properly this researcher nodded his head to affirm himself, using a cloth he bent down and soaked up the liquid drug.

“....u…..uh……...fu…….fueee”

Being poisoned by the drug, he began having powerful illusions, bringing him into a state of excitement, which caused his built up stress to be release. Unable to control his pent up emotions, he opened one side of the drawer of the desk.

“uuuh…..open! Open up! uu…..i can’t stand this anymore!e!”

His hazy sight fell upon the many cages that the capture wild beasts were contained in.

“Rele….ase….”

Chapter 67: Night scenery of Rinwaal

Two knight carriages were going south, towards Trent Rietta, on the highroad at the eastern coast of Fonclanc.

Yuusuke was sitting in the first carriage, that was driven by Vermeer, along with Sun, Razshia and Reifold, who tagged along for some unknown reason. The second carriage was driven by Shaheed. Aisha, Fonke, Isotta, and Sorzak were riding inside it.

When Sorzak heard from Yuusuke that the corps would be heading to Driadria in Trent Rietta, he requested to join them as he wanted to get some iron ore from the Waterstone mines.

As expected, fitting nine people along with their luggage in a single carriage was an impossible feat. Since they had to request a second carriage, they didn't have enough wind and water arts users who could keep the horses' stamina up and increase their running speed for both carriages.

Because of that they had abandoned the movement speed buff, and only enchanted the horse harness to allow them to run without any rest so they would be able to maximize the distance that they could travel during the day.

But even with that, they estimated that it would take four to five days to reach Rinwaal – the capital of Trent Rietta. However, they unexpectedly met Reifold in the carriage boarding place of the palace and he offered the Darkness God Corps his help by offering to provide the movement speed buff. Just like that, he had become a new member of the party.

With that, the Darkness God Corps became a big party of ten. They spent their first night at the port town at the eastern side of Fonclanc. Late in the afternoon on their second day of the trip they had approached the border with Trent Rietta.

"After we cross the border, we should be able to see Rinwaal soon. I believe we should be able to arrive before evening."

"Are you also familiar with Trent Rietta, Reifold?"

"Only that much."

"Hmm."

Reifold could effortlessly maintain the movement speed buff while simultaneously talking with Yuusuke. For Yuusuke, it was the first time that he had spent so much time with Reifold. He even was feeling that this felt similar to meeting a rare character or encountering a rare event.

He didn't even feel how his gaze drifted to the corner of the carriage where Sun was dozing off together with Razshia. Until Reifold arrived and it was decided that he would join the party, the former spy was being cheerful in the carriage boarding place of Sanc Adiet. However afterwards she suddenly started acting very maturely. It looked like the girl was wary of him.

"Do you think that her previous line of work gave her an uncanny intuition?"

“I haven’t even said anything yet. Wait, did you just read my thoughts.”

Following Yuusuke’s eyes, Reifold was able to guess his thoughts and indirectly talked about the reasons of why Razshia was avoiding him – her intuition screamed to her that Reifold was a dangerous person.

“Hey, wasn’t fighting outside of your field of specialty?”

“Personally I try to avoid the fights as much as I can. But I enjoy indirectly damaging my opponents equally as much.”

Reifold declared that in his usual carefree way. Certainly this type of opponent was one of the scariest that one had to fight against, so Yuusuke, deep in his heart wholly, agreed with Razshia.

While exchanging this conversation, the Darkness God Corps party had crossed the border and soon they were able to make out the first outlines of the city.

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The capital before them was enveloped in a faint light, making Rinwaal look like a city out of a fairy tale. Most of Trent Rietta’s territory was covered by the vast forest – the Sea of Trees – and it was the second oldest country after former Nossentes. The majority of the population in this country was comprised of wind arts users.

“It feels like a city from the fairy tales.”

“So beautiful!”

“…”

Rinwaal’s streets stood out with vines, roots and big leafs filling the entire view. Yuusuke felt like visiting a hidden city of the elves from some story while Sun was admiring the radiance that the plethora of riinlamps (リーンランプ no idea how to name these darn things) hung around everywhere gave to the streets. Everyone in the party stayed silent, moved by the view in front of their eyes.

“The wind… feels very special here.”

“Oh, what is that? It’s a country of wind users, in would be strange if it didn’t feel that way.”

“Captain, inn, let’s go to the inn. I want to go rest as quickly as possible.”

“You meant to say that you want to visit a brothel as soon as possible?”

Aisha nodded to Isotta’s admiration of the extremely delicate wind communications that were flowing through the city. Fonke continued being himself – his interest lied in the Nightsingers of this city instead of its magical scenery, and Vermeer just stood there, speechless.

The country carried the feeling of wind arts users. However, contrary to its image of a reclusive city surrounded by a forest, Trent Rietta’s people were surprisingly open. It felt like the people were truly free in both their bodies and minds. Also, they loved

gambling.

The King of the country also changed frequently and although the royal family was big, it held little political influence and voiced their opinion only if it was absolutely necessary.He was usually unrelated to the bloody political confrontations, and was usually elected from a family (house?) that did not hold any significant political power.

The kings changed frequently in cases of political errors or economic declines. The current king was forced to step down and a new person, who had sworn to take the responsibility for correcting the blunders, was crowned as a new king and allowed to lead the country. The current King was Grifzah. Amongst the various kings of Trent Rietta, he had been ruling for a quite long time.

His skills in politics were average, but he was a broad-minded person who would tolerate the mishaps of his subordinates, fortunately he was also a careful and calculating person.

"If you turn right into that street, you will arrive at a high class lodgings district."

"…You are well informed."

Although the visibility was good, the members of the corps were having trouble navigating the winding main street. Guided by Reifold, Vermeer whispered this single word before he turned right into the indicated street.

***

After reserving rooms in the high class lodgings district, Yuusuke and Vermeer accompanied by Reifold as their guide, went to the palace to meet the King as the representatives of the Darkness God Corps. Since they were performing an investigation within a foreign country, it was beneficial for them to greet the king and provide him with an official letter. (T.N. I guess to ask him to allow it even if the request was issued post-factum).

"Well then, I have no idea about how to formally greet a king."

"Ah, no worries, no worries. I will hand the official greeting so it will be fine for you to simply hand over the letter."

["It was your plan from the very beginning"] – thought Yuusuke, although he only shrugged his shoulders in response to the usual smile that Reifold had wore when he answered Yuusuke. Everything about the spontaneous and unexpected meeting in Sanc Adiet was, after all, a ploy to join this investigation.

Moreover, by casually joining the Darkness God Corps mission at the carriage boarding place, he avoided being placed on the official mission documents. It was possible that he was entrusted a certain special mission by Esvobus.

***

"I can't believe that it really ended with just handing over the official letter."

Yuusuke brought this topic with Vermeer during their trip back to the luxurious inn that the remaining members of their corps were awaiting their return. Reifold had remained

in the palace as it seemed that he had some complicated matters to exchange with the King of Trent Rietta.

"Well, it was quite a welcome."

"Reifold's father is also quite a cunning person"

Vermeer casually called King Esvobus "Reifold's father" and continued their talk regarding the plans for tomorrow. Razshia was the core of the group for investigating the trees that the moss was growing on, while Sorzak was made to lead the ore procurement group.

"By the way, there seems to be a lot of immigrants in this country and the streets look kind of unsafe to be in."

Plant harvesting and mining were two areas where the constant need of a workforce could always be felt in Driadria, so there were a lot of immigrants from other countries working within these industries. There were also some mercenaries that made light of earnest work and looked like thieves, waiting for their prey.

"The Ore party should be fine. It has Shaheed, Fonke, and Reifold said he would tag along."

"I agree with your choice."

The Waterstone mines were located in an open area high up above the sea level and they also had an open area, so one did not need to enter the tunnels. Therefore there was no way that the ore party would get lost. Although the deria trees that the solar moss grew on were located near the city, it was an area deep within the sea of trees that was poorly lit even during the day. Vermeer and Isotta for their powers to provide light and communication were indispensable for this mission.

***

When he returned to the inn, Yuusuke informed his subordinates about their duties that he had previously decided on.

"… so, in short, you want Shaheed and Fonke to escort Sorzak?"

"Understood."

"Whaaat? Will that guy also tag along….?"

Shaheed nodded in agreement and only replied with a single word and Fonke was obviously worried that Reifold would be included in the same group with him.

Fonke had knew of this guy since the Blue Garden incident. He had also seen him a few times in the palace, so he was well aware of the face that Reifold was an ally. However on this mission he would have to spend a longer period of time together with him. Therefore this time he had seemed to hold some reservations, similar to Razshia, regarding the mysterious wind arts user.

"I have certainly felt that he is hiding something more than a few times, therefore I believe it is better for him to stay near us so he cannot betray us."

Unexpectedly Sorzak had also joined the conversation. He shared his concerns and Fonke seemed to agree with his reasoning.

The remainder of the talks went without a hitch. It seemed that the worry over the unexpected addition of the party was the only worry of the members under Yuusuke's command.

***

During the night

"Are you still awake?"

"Ah, Yuusuke…"

Razshia, who was gazing at the night scenery and the starry sky of Rinwaal from the viewing terrace at the top of the inn, turned her head when she heard Yuusuke's voice. The streets that already looked wondrous during the day seemed to become even more mystical during the night.

"It looks beautiful."

"Ah, it certainly looks amazing."

The radiance of the riinlamps, the lights, bustling around the winding main street seemed to resemble the pulse of the city. This kind of night scenery that could only be seen in this single place in all of Kaltcio made Yuusuke feel nostalgic – it reminded him of the scenery of his own world.

"Hey?"

"Hm? Did you say something?"

"I don't know how to say it, but you looked really lonely just now."

"Eh, really?"

Yuusuke's surprised face clearly reflected how shocked he was. Razshia slightly inclined her head and softly hugged the youth. By softly tapping his back she was able to relieve the tension in his body and made his shoulders slump.

He was long out of puberty and had forgotten how pleasant the feeling of being hugged by someone could be. It was also very relieving. The two silently continued to watch Rinwall's scenery like that for some time.

"Have you calmed down?"

"Yeah, but now I have another reason to be nervous."

With a mischievous smile and a laugh Razshia softly released Yuusuke.

"Say, Yuusuke, aren't you trying too hard?"

"Ehm, you think so? I thought that I was a pretty easygoing person."

“Even if you are easygoing, it still shows.”

“…”

Although Razshia had failed to see the true nature of Yuusuke once, she did have a very good eye in reading the hearts of people. Yuusuke seemed to be exceptional for her, and it was not related to his unique divine art – it was a different kind of aura around him, one that she could not quite put into words.

On the surface he seemed to be a friendly person, one that was easy to talk to. It was a façade that Yuusuke unconsciously put up when his life in the previous world was suddenly destroyed. Unbeknownst to him, the youth started trying to become a person who could fulfil the expectations of everyone around him.

“You know, I have used a lot of different masks, therefore I understand… whether the person in front of me is real or not.”

“Is that so… It’s a bit vexing.”

In the end, the thing that defines “one’s true self”, the thing that can point out “that’s the right way”, can they not be defined by how one responds to the requests of those around him – was the doubt that continued swirling in Yuusuke’s mind.

“? The things you just said might be too difficult for me to understand.”

“Hey!”

Yuusuke understood that this was a question that he had to answer for himself so he decided that it would be for the best to drop this topic here. Razshia turned around, looked at him over her shoulder, and said as she winked her eye:

“I will accept you no matter who you are. A lord, a King, a person, or a god.”

“Ugh.”

Razshia’s words directly penetrated Yuusuke’s heart.

Chapter 68: Trouble at Driadria

The next day the Darkness God Corps party had left Rinwaal and headed towards Driadria. No one noticed when Reifold returned from the palace, but he joined the party for their breakfast and didn't have any qualms when he was told that he was to join the Rudea mines party.

"By the way, what did you talk to the King about yesterday?"

"We talked about the recent events and had some small talk."

"Is that so?"

Understanding that it was useless to pry further, Yuusuke easily accepted his answer. The only thing real about Reifold was his usual smile. There were two roads that could have been used to travel between Rinwaal and Driadria. The road that the locals used, which trekked through the mountains and a longer road that did not pass through any difficult terrain. Because the party was not used to traveling the dangerous mountain roads they opted for a safer choice.

Then again, the modified demon beasts' incident was not yet solved so the safety of the other road was also questionable at best.

Currently they were back in Fonclanc's territory, travelling towards that different road. They approached Trent Rietta's territory for the second time at around noon and had stopped for a break. By the time they reached Driadria the sun had already set.

"Whoa, so this is Driadria."

After disembarking from the carriage, Razshia was turning around, admiring the view of the city. The second city of the country was built at the intersection of the major roads. The city seemed to be divided into a mountain half and a forest half, thus conveying a particular artistic sense of its builders.

The roads in the city center were widened during the development, so the highway roads trekked through the middle of the city. A lot of carriages and stalls of the trading companies were also lined along these roads.

"The city is bustling!"

"Rather than just bustling, it is also awfully noisy."

"There are also a lot of armed people, they're probably mercenaries."

"Could it be related to the evil beast incident?"

Yuusuke asked, about the reason why there were a lot of armed people, which seemed to be out of context in the busy city. Shaheed answered his captain that this city also had a huge number of immigrants and the armed groups simply stood out more from the rest.

"So they are not related to the modified evil beasts," muttered Aisha, complementing Shaheed's answer.

The Darkness God Corps carriages were slowly moving along the rinlamp lit main street. They were riding in a foreign country's military carriage so they attracted quite a bit of attention. The party was talking about the city when a man approached the carriage and greeted them in a loud voice.

"Hey! So you guys came here as well, huh?"

A person separated from one of the armed groups and approached them while waving his hands. He was one of the adventurers that had fought alongside them in the forest during the evil beast incident. The memory of him trampling the larvae of the evil beast that had killed his comrades was still fresh in everyone's minds.

"It's been a while. You seem to have regained your spirit."

The adventurer smiled to Yuusuke's careful greeting and waved to his comrades, motioning them to come over as well. The other mercenaries, however still seemed to be wary as if approaching such a carriage was dangerous.

"So, did you guys also come here to investigate the evil beasts research facility?"

"The evil beasts research facility?"

"Am I wrong? Surely you have come here to exterminate those beasts… no, no matter how I look at it you have come here too quickly."

"I have no idea what you are talking about…"

Yuusuke's party was dumbfounded, unable to comprehend the adventurers monologue. Hence the man explained them about the incident that this city was currently involved in, and why it was so noisy and full of armed people.

Late last night a single, barely alive man had arrived at the city. The man was gravely wounded and had trouble breathing even when healing arts were used to help him. Between his ragged breaths he started telling the people around him about an evil beast modification and research institute that he was working at. His words brought fear and uneasiness into people's minds but alongside them curiosity and ambition had also appeared.

According to the survivor, one of the scientists had gone crazy and opened the cages with the evil beasts and the situation within the institute had quickly turned to hell.

Some of the researchers tried to use the special flutes that were used to control the evil beasts that had not yet undergone complete modification. Yet the special divine art aura of the flutes had also called more evil beasts, and the researchers that had tried to stop the rampage with these flutes were all devoured.

The surviving researchers had managed to close off the research facility and escape, but some of the beasts had already managed to escape into the forest. The researchers were attacked and scattered by these beasts on their way to the city.

The researcher that had somehow managed to reach the city was afraid that the research that he had participated in had wrought an unthinkable calamity. Warning everyone of the danger should these modified beasts mates with the beasts in the wilderness, the man drew his last breath.

“Normal beasts can be killed with divine arts, but the modified one’s can only be killed with weapons.”

The flute was supposed to make them powerless, but using it had a danger of alerting other beasts in the surrounding area. Yet a tool that could control these beasts was very valuable.

Flutes aside, even if it was currently closed, there was supposed to be a lot of expensive equipment inside the research facility.

It was probably because of these news that adventurers and mercenary groups started gathering in this city. At the same time the citizens were eager to hire them to protect themselves from the threat that these beasts posed to the city.

Therefore the bustle of the city was not one that could be heard while preparing for war nor was it normal. It was a cacophony of both – there were people that had come to exterminate the evil beasts, there were also treasure hunters that came hoping to quickly attain their wealth, and there were also merchants, that those venturing into the forest, relied on for supplies.

“So, this means that we stumbled on the continuation of that incident.”

“We should also inform our country about this. Anyways, let’s find an inn”

Vermeer glanced at Isotta as he said that. They were moving at walking pace while they were talking and now they noticed that a mercenary carriage and a trader carriage had already approached them from behind.

As expected, since the carriage belonged to the military corps of Fonclanc and since the famous Darkness God Corps members were riding in it, the people of the trailing carriage hesitated in voicing their complaints.

“Ahh, I’m sorry! I’ll have it move to the side as soon as I can.”

The young captain bowed his head in apology as the carriage turned into a street, leading to the lodgings district. Seeing this, the drivers of the carriages behind Yuusuke’s carriage could only involuntarily bow their heads in return.

“Oh, sorry, sorry, it seems I have held you up with the chatter.”

“Don’t mind it, you gave us a lot of valuable information.”

The high class lodging district was your typical street with normal-looking inns lined along both sides of the street. It seemed that there also were fewer people here. After not having to be wary of carriages, trailing behind him, Yuusuke decided to continue his conversation with the adventurer, who gave him the valuable info, for a little while longer.

“Are the injured from that time healed already?”

“Ah, the injuries seemed light. I think that they should have healed already, but I have separated from those guys after that so I have no way to be certain about it.”

“Eh, separated? Ah, you had formed a temporary party for that one mission, right?”

"No, we had been together for five, no, six years… just that treasure hunting was our main purpose."

The adventurer suddenly got quiet. It seems that the losing close to half of the party was a huge blow to everyone. Knowing that he should not pry further into the matter, Yuusuke tried to change the topic, but the adventurer, his face still a grim mask, continued speaking about his former party.

"We have been searching about the legend of the Moon Mirror Lake, but after encountering those evil beasts… the other members…"

"Eh, eh, ehm… So you joined a mercenary group afterwards? That is, how do I say it…"

"That's right! If we were a group of mercenaries, we wouldn't have lost so easily."

With the way that adventurer was acting, Yuusuke's corps were shocked by the way that the adventurer had acted towards his comrades. Razshia and Sorzak, who had only encountered this adventurer for the first time today, had also felt something akin to madness from the adventurer's words.

"Oh drat! I have to get back, my comrades should be starting to get worried about me. See ya!"

The former adventurer waved his hand as he said that and ran towards the main street.

"…Ugh…"

"Captain, we are also about to arrive at our inn."

Yuusuke groaned painfully. The atmosphere within the party was heavy for some time after the adventurer had left.

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The party entered the inn that they had contacted in advance and prepared to hold an emergency meeting regarding how to react to the information about the modified evil beasts.

The inn that the Darkness God Corps had reserved was small but exquisite. The party entered the main room of the inn and sat around the largest table. Reifold alone remained standing, leaning against the wall near the corridor.

"I am worried about the evil beasts, but our purpose here this time is to research the moss. I believe, tomorrow we should continue our designated mission."

"So you mean to avoid active participation in this incident?"

It seemed that a reply from Fonclanc on the information that they sent regarding this incident would arrive tomorrow afternoon at the earliest. The incident happened in the territory of another country, moreover their help was not necessary but the incident itself seemed to be dangerous, thus everyone was in favor of Yuusuke's proposed course of action regarding the recent events.

Sorzak raised his hand, asking if they should not at least consider the current situation.

“I didn’t expect there to be so many mercenaries and adventurers gathered here, but I think we should take them into account. Our corps are famous, we can’t disregard the possibility of some of them trying to profit of our name by challenging or provoking us. I believe we have to consider these dangers and prepare countermeasures to avoid getting into fights and other troubles.”

“Regarding this I propose that we constantly remain in groups of no less than three people whenever we leave the city.”

“Well, if that’s the Captain’s decision, then I have no qualms about it.”

“Ah, it will be alright, if we’re with the captain.”

“Eh, I feel safe if I’m with the Captain.”

Vermeer, Shaheed, and Aisha immediately replied like that, while Isotta also nodded in agreement. Fonke, who was finishing a bottle of alcohol besides the table, choked on the drink, glanced at Yuusuke, and asked his three comrades – “What’s with this reply?”

“Because, if Yuusuke gets involved, enemies always destroys themselves, don’t they?”

Everyone nodded, agreeing to Razshia’s answer.

Chapter 69: The root tree forest

After one night had passed in the city of Driadria, the noisy commotion yesterday had died down, the surrounding troops and adventurer groups have been on high alert.

On the southeastern side, a commercial fleet from the trade association that they had announced had gathered on the road, preparing to head towards Gazzetta's city.

The current state of affairs was done by Trent Rietta's government, in order to prevent the spreading of the modded beast which escaped from the facility, the army was brought in to seal the area. At the same time, they issued a formal emergency notice to every country.

The Darkness God Corps had already sent information regarding the current situation near Driadria to Fonclanc, thus when the government of Trent Rietta announced their emergency notice, early in the morning in Volance palace a meeting regarding ways to support them was being held.

"But well….it's laughable that it has continued up to this place."

Violet who goes wherever she wants was once again full of admiration towards Yuusuke's divine attribute as she saw the storage room which the Rin lamp was stored and how it had lit up the room.

At the same time, the villagers of Rufk village, the soldiers who were stationed there and also Zeshald was being alerted about the magical beasts. A mere coincidence, or the real nature of the Evil God, to call upon disaster.

"We need to consider how we are going to receive the people that are taking refuge from another village."

"Ung…..there is still some plots of land, it should be good enough for housing them."

"If Yuusuke was around we would have saved all that trouble" Bahana said as she knew about Yuusuke ultra-fast architecture customization capabilities, while Zeshald replied with a "yes" and a sigh.

After establishing the old divine temple of Patrucia Nost as the centre of Gazzetta, King Shinha gave command to the guard troops coming from Trent Rietta to secure the circumference of the forest, as he was demanding to know why he wasn't informed sooner by the spies which had a different set of information.

It was about the information that the Darkness God Corps had headed towards Driadria, as the spies put off this information deeming the magical beasts facilities of more importance, when Shinha had heard about it, it was already one day late.

Determining that the scale of danger of the leak of these magical beasts around Driadria being truly dangerous, Shinha decided on assisting the Evil God Yuusuke.

While trying to ascertain the qualities of the Evil God Yuusuke, he had recouped some of the 2000 years white clan empire's great city and territories, now, after confirming

the powers of the Evil God, he wasn't going to lose the key to sustain the prosperity of Gazetta which is also known as Yuusuke.

As a result of withholding the information, the Darkness God Corps were plunged straight into a danger zone, placing Shinha in a worse condition.

"I hope everything goes well."

Originally, Shinha's aim was to slowly gather information about the facility and spy on how Trent Rietta and Fonclanc will move while surveying both of their forces, determining how seriously will they take the magical beast threat.

"Hey Shin boya, without any clear strategies and information to subdue and control them, you do realise that it might not go as planned right?"

"....so then, when that time comes please instruct me."

"By that time, the instructions might not help."

The village oracle cackled and laughed, while Shinha sighed at her.

The city of Driadria is a divine art users city, the top people of the country had connections with various Blue garden's supporters and there were those who were friendly with Fonclanc, due to that the policing of the city was difficult. Passing through the forest was an entirely different thing compared to approaching one of their cities.

"I'll depart tomorrow, this time I will only bring my entourage."

"What, are you planning to go to go by yourself again despite being a king? You should at least consider the position of your ministers and staff."

"To gain the trust of the Evil God Yuusuke using subordinates is not ideal, as the opponents are magical beast, those without the skills to handle the magical beasts will lose their life."

"No matter what age you were, you've been a composed person, even if you become an arrogant ruler once you sit on the throne, I'm fine with it."

Replying with sharp words while showing a big happy smile, the oracle was informing him in order to avoid unnecessary conflict she herself will accompany him to guide him.

"Will you meet with Yuusuke?"

"Yes, I am want to peek on him a little."

".....I understand."

Luxury inn in Driadria~~

"Well then, let's meetup once for lunch."

Yuusuke's group split into 2 as half of them entered Dria's(デリア) forest to harvest the solar moss the other half would head to Rudia's(ルディア) water stone mine.

Within the red alert city, equipped with the magic flutes the many mercenary and adventurers group have began to split apart, as they divided themselves to get ready to face the modded beast from the research facility that was in total lockdown. It seems that the objective of adventurers who were under temporary contracts with the leading mercenaries forces were to hunt for treasures in the facility.

"Hey look, seems like the Darkness God Corps are moving out."

"No, they are just heading out to investigate the solar moss."

A few members of the mercenary group began following the Darkness God Corps, as they were wondering where they were heading to, were disappointed when they found that the Darkness God Corps were heading to a different direction from the blockade.

Within the allied group of mercenaries, there were skeptics who doubted the fame of the Darkness God Corps, and began to gossip about rumors.

"Somehow yesterday seems to be exaggerated."

"After the turmoil had settled, it's easy to stand out from the mercenaries group."

In the morning, the number of stalls on the streets felt to be scarce, Vermeer was using his fire arts to illuminate the road within the thick morning mist while pulling the reins as he spoke. In the carriage, Razshia and Sun were still sleepy and half asleep.

"Isotta is fully awake."

"Ah, yes….because usually, I wake up early in the morning."

"Oh~~so the artless city life isn't much different from Rufk village life."

"Yes….from fetching of water to the preparation of a meal, I have been doing everything by myself."

As the carriage rocked and vibrated into the dark forest towards the harvesting location, Yuusuke and Isotta were happily chatting.

The area was surrounded with dimly visible light. The harvesting location of the Solar moss was a wetlands where the roots intertwined as the special trees grew above the water surface, and around the area of those trees, sparkling light could be seen.

The solar moss that had dislodged from the tree floats on the water surface which spreads around causing the entire region to be wrapped in light.

"This scene is like something from a fantasy~"

"That's true…..it's amazingly beautiful."

The girls (across the board) sigh in admiration at the sight. The young and nervous worker guides for the Darkness God Corps after seeing the uncommon reaction of the happy faces of the girls began explaining the ecology of the solar moss and the tree in which the moss clings onto.

“This tree is known as “root tree”, as the name suggest you can see the roots protruding out.”

“Oh~”

The Rin Lamp uses the combination of solar moss and a water stone, the light can be adjusted up to a certain amount and it seems that the water stones are the key to it.

Like the water stone, the roots of the tree absorbed a composition of materials from the ground and stores it, the solar moss takes the composition which then creates nutrients for the roots of the trees, this process causes it to glow.

“I see, so it’s a give and take relationship.”

“Eh, I was told that there would be some kind of secret to the geology of this region, to think that this was the reason why the roots tree would only grow in these parts.”

In conclusion, the condition to stabilize the solar moss for cultivation is to create an artificial environment for both the roots tree and moss to grow.

“How about crushing the water stones to use as soil, or bringing the soil that is around this area back~.....:

“Ah~, up until now was this method ever being tried when they were researching the cultivation methods?”

Eventually it might not proceed smoothly. Especially within this area, there will be many others opposing the method to take the soil of this area which might cause devastating effect on the environment, even 2 potted plants were not allowed.

“Well, that is to be expected.”

“.....thank you for your understanding.”

The young guide who was hired by the Darkness God Corp Captain to lead them to the harvesting location had heard about something akin to the wide range area modification skills that corps Captain had under his disposal, thus he could not completely shake a fear that what he thought to be common sense would be overturned..

“So how Shia, did you understand anything from it?”

“Ng~, where’s the water source for this place?”

“Erm, it’s a little more deeper inside, there should be a spring there. It isn’t linked to the moon mirror lake, like I have said before.”

“Spring….?”

Razshia came up with a proposal to examine the tree, soil and water source, thus she began the list of activities to examine the entire ecology of the solar moss which attached to the root trees, from the soil to the nearby water source which provided the spring water and how it worked.

Yuusuke began his test by checking on the status of the water and soil through the customization menu, within the sliders for hardness and particles, the solar moss, roots tree and the amount of nutrients that are being used could be examined.

With the exact formula for the soil's composition, as long as he had the materials to mix with ordinary soil, by cross referencing with the customization menu, mixing the soil to a similar type of state, and creating an exact copy of the environment, making a colony of it is possible.

"Just making only one copy of data should be enough."

Most probably this place consists of a very delicate balance, if anyone were to tinker with it, it will affect the entire ecosystem. After recording the status of the water and soil, he gently closed the customization menu.

"Yuusuke~! We need to collect some of the soil in this area, go take a container~!"

After bossing Vermeer to examine the different type of rocks mosses and the nearby plant life, from between the trees, Razshia was waving at him.

"Okay~, but there isn't any empty containers."

"Ah, I will go bring it over."

"Sorry for the inconvenience."

Being troubled as Yuusuke had brought containers that were already filled, Sun immediately went to the carriage and retrieved new containers.

While requesting the servant girl who was wearing a black band, the Darkness God Corp's Captain held an apologetic attitude which caused the youth guide to be bewildered by the strange side as he began staring with a somewhat strange look.

Chapter 70: Fragment of doubt

"How's it over there?"

"Na~ it seems pretty hard to get a good stone."

Yuusuke had returned to the inn in Driadria after one activity, as they began discussing about their results and reports during the late lunch.

Sorzak seems to have collected the necessary amount of iron ore, and had contracted someone to deliver his ores to Fonclanc.

Since the current mission has already been accomplished, the research on the sampled soil will be continued in the basement of Yuusuke's mansion.

"Well now, since the mission is done, it should be time for some sightseeing but…."

"The current situation won't allow us to have a light hearted tour though."

"Rinval, we should be able to have a calm time there right?"

"Since the tasks are completed, we could head there at any time."

In the end, since they are currently in the danger zone, there is no point to stay here any longer, thus they will be heading home tomorrow. SInce there weren't any huge items to be dismantled, they began preparing the carriage with food and water to head home.

Dusk. When the mercenaries and adventurers came back to the city, the number of casualties seemed to have racked up more than the predicted amount, and it appeared that the vicinity around the magical beast facility was more dangerous than expected. Amongst them, there were those who began blatantly criticizing the Darkness God Corps "for being afraid" as they were preparing to head home.

But Yuusuke had adopted the strategy to ignore the insults and provocations in order to avoid trouble.

As night fell, the Darkness God Corps Squad members had their free time to think over it before heading to bed. Aisha and Isotta took Shaheed and Fonke to various clothing shops, while Vermeer and Sorzak headed to the hotel bar. For some reason, Reifold seemed to have disappeared and vanished from the room.

Yuusuke accompanied Sun and Razshia to the nearby street stalls.

"So what kind of souvenirs should I bring back?"

"If it's for Violet-sama, what are your thoughts on a glittering pendant?"

"If it's that princess, she would definitely like it."

The structure of the Rin lamp isn't very complicated, as there were many pendant sized rin lamp accessories lined up along the stalls. Although the items didn't last long,

it was possible to refill the luminous moss.

While Yuusuke's gang were enjoying the relaxing shopping, at a nearby drinking bar, a group of drunkards began making a ruckus with some people wearing black uniforms.

(Drunken Chatter)

"Sun, Shia, let's go around that way."

"Okay."

"Alright."

Giving a wry smile towards the drunkards over at the opposite side of the street, Yuusuke urged the two to head down another way. When they were going back after shopping, they saw a number of people who had been spreading rumors, leaving them unchecked might become harmful.

Sorzak had warned that amongst the mercenaries and adventurers, there were those who were desperate to rise in fame, and in order to hasten their progress to become renowned, they came to ascertain the strength of the Darkness God Captain Yuusuke.

Even so, there weren't any of them who would dive into a direct confrontation with Yuusuke after the challenge duel with their predecessor Thalys. There were those who were ambitious, some idealist, but generally most of them were sensible, as they proceed with caution. However, there were those who weren't patient and were thoughtless to their actions and thus were easily manipulated by others.

"O~i, Ar~e you runn~ing away? Ooh?"

"Hey…..come with me?"

"U~n, I'm not drunk."

"This is troublesome…."

There were a few observers surrounding them who noticed that Yuusuke and his gang were troubled by it while coming back from shopping, as these observers were waiting and anticipating for something to occur. There were many excited drunkards drawn to the action.

These fellas were provoking Yuusuke's gang without actually challenging him, as they were trying to access his rumored strength, whether he actually possesses it or not like the rumors said, and ascertain that the duel was not a setup.

In the rumors, he had placed a giant wall instantaneously, built a fortress in an instant, teleported around, but there wasn't any info on how he fights. As long as they could see a little bit of his powers which was in the rumors, from there they could then strategize on tactics and counter methods.

However, their drunkard friends that came out from the bar didn't do as planned and had easily dispersed.

"Oi, what are you guys doing, return to your seats. The leader of Dria will be treating

drinks.”

The drunkard who couldn’t even speak properly returned towards the bar. After seeing them off, a young man wearing leather came to Yuusuke to apologize for the former adventurer.

“I’m sorry, his closest friends didn’t come back from the scouting trip today….thus he’s drowning his sorrows in alcohol.”

“I see…. No worries, I got the general idea, thanks for telling me.”

Showing his understanding, Yuusuke nodded and thanked the former adventurer. Just the other day, during their conversation on the main street, he could feel the crazy talks they had, which led to trying to stay within safe talks, as Yuusuke suggested.

“Is the Darkness God Corps going to return home?”

“Yea, since we have tentatively completed our current mission.”

The former adventurer became silent as he thought and slowly began to talk.

“....erm, I know it’s pretty unreasonable, I wish that you could lend a hand on the magical beast slaying.”

“Erm that is….”

Having to deal with multiple magical beast, even the mercenary corps were having a hard time, not to mention the anti-divine arts ability which rendered the conventional methods useless against them.

Since the devastating amount of casualties from the scouting group, the mercenary and adventurer group became cautious of their future activities.

“I understand that this is an unreasonable request. But, it might have fallen under the official duties?”

He who had fought with the magical beast and coming out unscathed...knowing that the Darkness God Corps had successfully repelled them before, if he could get them to join, the other groups and members would be able to be inspired by them.

“I believe that soon the magical beasts incident will escalate, please reconsider.”

With those words, the former adventurer headed back to the bar where his group was waiting for him.

“Hmmm”

Yuusuke didn’t want to place his group in danger and he also wanted to avoid any unnecessary danger, while he will felt bad for ignoring that person’s plight. Although he was bothered by the dangerous atmosphere that was filling up the area.

That said, having already decided to return home to bring up such a story will cause anyone to be perplexed and troubled.

"How about asking everyone about it?"

"I will follow Yuusuke-san no matter what he decides."

"Ng~, me too."

Discuss it or not, that was the problem. However, he groaned as Reifold called out and came towards Yuusuke and gang from an alley when they were returning from their trip.

"Oya, heading back today?"

"Oh it's Reifold …. wait a minute, how come you were in that gap."

Good timing, just when Yuusuke needed an advisor and a third opinion, as this self proclaimed forest resident came out between the gap of 2 buildings. Seeing Razshia still being tense and wary of Reifold, he left her to Sun as the 2 headed back to the inn.

"Yeah, I think that overdoing one's duty is not a problem though ~~"

Since this magical beast threat concerned the whole of Kalticio, whether to try assisting them or to simply cooperate with them, Reifold suggested it in a non half hearted expression which was rare.

"I can't come to a decision just by that talk alone…"

"Let's think through this step by step."

This is just the beginning of the magical beast threat, so far it's still limited to the local geographical area of Trent Rietta. However, currently at this very location, most of the world's mercenaries and adventurers have gathered here.

If they were to make a move here, the Darkness God Corps activities will be witnessed by the entire information network spreading through Trent Rietta and it will leave an impression on the different countries and people throughout Kalticio.

"Yuusuke-kun's activity might even give a positive impact on the world."

"The world…."

Reifold's words seemed to pierce straight into Yuusuke's heart from his ears. As he repeated in his brain "positive impact on the world."

"Tsu!"

Suddenly, "sfx:Kring" the sound of breaking glass awoke Yuusuke's consciousness as he was drifting off. Realising his conscious had drifted off, he began blinking his eyes rapidly.

"What….was I doing!"

Being a little frightened, unlike her usual look, she had a grim look as she could not feel the presence of Reifold who Isotta had been glaring at from the corner of the street.

Isotta who realised Reifold had used “Wind illusion” on Yuusuke and made an “interference wind” to override the hypnotic effect.

“Oh, this is an unexpected event.”

Making a move that was unbelievable, Reifold showed a smile he always had. Aware of Isotta being nearby, although she was timid, even if she interfered with the illusion, she wouldn’t be able to do anything else.

She sent an SOS signal towards the inn to her fellow Darkness God Corps member, when they heard about the situation from Isotta, they took their weapons and came menacingly at Reifold.

The face of the two, Sun and Razshia who had left earlier, Sun appeared with a bow in a hand while Razshia was holding the arrowheads in assistance.

“Whoa whoa, chill everyone. This time there was a little situation.”

Feeling the situation had grew relatively intense, Reifold became flustered, in fact it was Trent Rietta’s king who requested to borrow the power of the Darkness God Corps. As Vermeer began to explanation.

“Wait a minute, aren’t you supposed to be on Fonclanc’s side? Why are you moving according to Trent Rietta.”

“To say for Trent Rietta, more so, it would actually benefit Fonclanc.”

“If the Darkness God Corps were to participate in this it will become beneficial to Fonclanc?”

“Simply put, it’s that sort of thing.”

Reifold began to explain that by allowing the Darkness God Crops to spearhead the current situation and solve it, which Trent Rietta had agreed upon, it will further increase the fame of Fonclanc.

But the fact that he used the wind illusion technique on Yuusuke was something that couldn’t be overlooked. Yuusuke scratched his head as he told his subordinates that “the illusion technique that was just cast” didn’t feel dangerous, while they were still looking cautious and alert.

“It can’t be….did you use it on me during that time in the forest?”

“No, at that time I didn’t use it.”

In truth, he was lost and had consulted the girl right? As he looked towards Sun and turned to Reifold. Catching onto Yuusuke’s sight, Sun immediately reacted and showed a face that she did not see Reifold the other time.

“Fumu….but, this kind of method was it approved by Violet’s dad?”

“You have poked on a painful part.”

If Violet were to hear about this she would definitely flare up for Yuusuke, Reifold who knew this was showing a bitter smile. It seems that there were some other kinds of circumstances behind it.

“Ng, if the Darkness God Crops by themselves could do something about the current Magical Beast Facilities blockade, there will be quite a number of benefits.”

“What do you mean?”

“King Esvobus values your strength and existence.”

While listening to him, Yuusuke and the gang were questioning, “is this King Esvobus’s idea?” As they felt shaken by it. Everyone believed that Reifold was currently doing a special mission for the king, as it was a dangerous mission, and there were plans to interfere with the matter of the modded beasts, it was then judged that there was a “limited time”.

King Esvobus evaluated on the various promising ways, and he came to the conclusion of infiltrating the surrounding countries. He took the necessary measures, while also being a bit hesitant, making the Virtuous King known for also being a sly fox, within and outside the country.

If the Darkness God Corp’s captain were to be involved with the magical beast incident by his own will and if they were KIA, then the King would not evacuate the citizens under the pretext that he did not give the order, he would do what he normally does and rally up the citizens by using, “the brave hero had perished under the dangerous magical beast.”

Reifold had to follow up in order to wipe away the doubt in the heart of the Darkness God Corp members who had suspicions. Yuusuke who seem to be lost, puzzledly looked towards everyone else.

“Now that you have received those words, the King would like to leave the judging to the Darkness God Corps.”

“Then why….didn’t you just give us a direct order of a mission instead?”

Shaheed who initially questioned Reifold looked towards Isotta who was still being cautious by his illusion technique and began laughing at his surrender post while speaking frankly.

To inform the cooperation with the current magical beast facilities blockade to homeland. And King Esvobus approves of it. With the current state of things, the Darkness God Corps would help lessen the burden of the Trent Rietta’s army.

King Khafre expresses his thanks to Fonclanc and declared a friendship of the two countries, followed by a military alliance.

In order to blockade the area near the magical beast facilities without resulting in any casualties and the monitoring of the scattered magical beasts on 2 of the highways connecting to Gazzetta and Trent Rietta, the army had established a base.

Behind the scenes, Trent Rietta and Fonclanc's trade restriction through the highway blockade will be lifted in the near future with the aim to slowly chip away the power of Gazzetta. As of now, it is difficult to contain and maintain against an invasion from Gazzetta's army forces.

By using this modded beast incident, it allowed Fonclanc and Trent Rietta to move without being suspected upon.

"Also, in order to allow Yuusuke to be involved in such dangerous work, they had to maneuver Princess Violet to look the other way."

This is to hide King Esvobus's scheme and to justify that the Darkness God Corps had operated by themselves.

"I'm sorry to have offended the lady's mood with my blant explanations."

"Well that…. one could say that's a doting parent."

Yuusuke was used by the King as a normal soldier would be, this time it was in the form of a "secret order", but due to many different circumstances it could not be sent through the normal channels, thus he had Reifold do it in a roundabout way.

"In any case, even it's for such a reason, it would be bad if we were to ignore it."

Although Yuusuke himself doesn't want to throw himself into danger, but since Fonclanc's palace knights are too far to provide backup due to their position and it's also above their paycheck, in order to go to the limits of the king ideas, they would join and cooperate with the mercenaries and adventurer group on the facilities blockade.

"Details aside, you guys are the country's usable force."

"The Captain hasn't decided it."

"Well, although I don't like the method, we have no choice."

"So captain has already decided…."

"I will follow Yuusuke-san anytime."

Thus that was what the Darkness God Corps members replied to Yuusuke's decision. Since the decision has been made, they headed back to the inn and asked for an extension, next they headed to the carriage and unloaded some items, as to prepare for tomorrow's activity.

Sorzak and Razshia will head on home first with the materials they have collected, Reifold had promised to escort them back safely to Sanc Adiet.

"I am so sorry that I cannot help with the fighting."

"Please be careful everyone, make sure you all come home safely."

As they were heading back home first Sorzak was fretting over it, while Razshia was praying for the safety of everyone. Thus the 2 of them woke up at dawn and together with Reifold they departed from Driadria.

Thus under a guise, the Darkness God Corps participated in the magical beast facility blockade activity.

"Erm, by using a special wave length….together with wind to change the sounds fluctuation….from it, I had created a state of hypnosis."

"Hmmhmm"

Strictly speaking, this wind art requires a reduction in noise to the surroundings and needs to maintain good control over it, as its effect is greater than other kinds of divine arts, as Isotta explained.

"The point is that it enters through the ears by playing some secret sound tune. But will it work against filters?"

As Isotta began explaining her "illusion wind"'s properties, Yuusuke began to create anti-measure against it on their uniforms.

Chapter 71: Onwards to the Evil Beast Institute

"Captain, a messenger from yet another mercenary group has arrived."

"It seems that several adventurer groups also want to join under you." (as subordinates)

"Uhm… even a maid has come here seeking for employment."

The news of the Evil God Corps moving towards the sealed institute had spread through the town like wildfire. Big mercenary groups immediately sent their messengers, with adventurer groups following them in a seemingly endless stream.

Yuusuke's party also had a lot of preparations to make, they left the meetings for a later date and asked everyone to leave.

"Bluntly speaking, this feels like shunning off the parasites."

"Parasites?"

"Ahh, that is… don't they look like people that don't have the capacity to handle the task at hand and are trying to join with an other, more capable, party instead?"

"Ah I get it. What a perfect way to describe them."

Vermeer nodded with a strange expression, agreeing to the explained meaning of a somewhat derogatory word that Yuusuke often used when playing internet games in his world.

The next day, they met with the representative of every mercenary and adventurer group in the main room of the inn that the Darkness God Corps had rented, and screened for any potentially useful applicants.

It seemed that only big mercenary groups had enough capable people to be of any use as an advance party. Smaller groups tried to voice their complaints but they were quickly silenced with a shout.

"WE DID NOT COME HERE TO CARRY YOUR ASSES" (Orig: We did not come here to give charity to everyone here)

The one shouting, strangely, was not Yuusuke, whose voice did not have the necessary strength in it, but the usually silent Shaheed.

On the other hand, amongst the groups that satisfied the capability requirements, the groups which were not willing to share any vital information with their comrades, who were also risking their lives on this mission, were asked to leave, using the group that the former adventurer who informed the Darkness God Corps about this incident as an example.

Because the group that the guy belonged to was pretty skilled and was relatively well known, they were able to gain some trust from the parties that initially doubted the abilities of the Darkness God Corps.

After deciding on the route, the member election and discussions about how to divide the loot had started. Yuusuke entrusted the meeting and arguments to Vermeer. Having confirmed the parts of the plan that the others had decided on, and after listening for the explanations, he finally decided on the final course of action.

"So, it would be easier to advance under these conditions?"

"Yeah, I leave it to you. Also I leave you responsible for everything around this area."

Yuusuke thought that it was better for him as a novice in these kind of things to keep his mouth shut and leave everything to his subordinates, who were much more skilled in this field than him. His subordinates, having received their boss' trust, gave a vigorous shout and skillfully managed the negotiations.

Finally they settled on the contract which gave the Darkness God Corps priority over mercenary and adventurer groups on any valuable goods like evil beasts or research data, should they find any in the in the institution.

After sorting out some minute details, today's meeting had come to a close and everyone was dismissed to prepare for tomorrow.

"Pheeew, can we take a break now?"

"Well, execution of all of this is coming up next."

"I think there will be others that will tag along with us despite being told not to."

"Is that alright? We have a lot of people this time."

"Good job everyone."

After the last of the representatives had left, everyone in the room started to relax – some of the party members stretched their bodies, while others heaved a sigh. At the same time, Sun and Isotta brought some tea to everyone. Aisha had left the room and went to the kitchen to arrange the supper for her friends.

"So, we're going to exterminate the evil beasts tomorrow?"

"We have decided on a joint operation with other groups. With captain's support we should avoid the fate of the advance group."

"Ah, so then, Sun it would be best for you to not leave the Captain's side."

"Eh? Ah, yes I will do my best."

By now, no one in the Darkness God Cops had viewed Sun as an "Artless girl" anymore – she had become a friend to all of them. However that did not mean that the people outside of the corps would share the save view. The same thing had actually happened while renting this very inn, as Sun was initially shown to the servant's room instead of a guest's room.

The following exchange took part between Yuusuke and the inn's staff when he noticed this and immediately protested it, requesting a room for the girl at the same floor as everyone else.

“Eh, but she’s only an Artless servant, right?”

“Are you questioning the rules within our corps?”

The inn’s staff only followed what was common practice for every guest, visiting the inn. However that was quite shocking for Yuusuke, who still had not gotten completely accustomed to the values of this world where such treatment was commonplace.

Because of that Yuusuke had voiced his complaint in a belittling way that made the staff look very ashamed and also left a bad aftertaste to the captain as well.

“It seems that Sun’s clothes were also customized in some way.”

“Sun chaaan, let the Captain customize you as well tonight.”

“EH?!”

[Bang bang bang … bang]

Fonke had gotten pretty drunk on the wine that the mercenaries and adventurers had brought along as a sign of friendship. His recent comment earned him a simultaneous hit on the head by Yuusuke, Aisha, and Vermeer to shut him up. Slightly late, Isotta also joined the punishment.

“Phew…”

Sighing at the sight of the usual relaxed atmosphere of his friends, Shaheed caught himself thinking that he should also join into this banter from now on.

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The next day Darkness God Corps party left Driadria, and headed towards the Evil Beast Research Institute along with the joint force of mercenaries and adventurers that had formed during the talks on the day before. Preparing for a fight once they got close to the institute, the group consisted mostly of the people skilled in using either close combat weapons or healing type divine arts.

As Shaheed had predicted, they could see a small group trailing behind them, but seeing no harm in the trailing group joining the main group, it was decided to overlook it.

According to the dead researcher, a hidden road leading to the institution could be found not far away from the city. The passage itself was hidden under the undergrowth, but once entered it spanned all the way to the institution.

The Darkness God Corps formed the core of the investigation party and led it towards the exit that was closest to the city.

The advance group had fought the evil beasts around here and sustained heavy casualties. It was expected that there would be many more evil beasts lurking around the road to the research facility.

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~A little while after leaving the city.~

After lunch, they pressed on a barely noticeable road. Finally, around sunset, the research expedition had finally arrived at a neighboring forest that was their destination.

"It's there! There was a response."

"I can feel it this way too. They have gathered around the entrance after all."

Scouts, responsible for seeking out the enemies with their wind arts, were immediately able to confirm several evil beasts. The group swiftly prepared for a battle, assuming a defensive formation with non-combatants being enclosed in the middle by the fighters.

"Call the group from behind us to also come here. I think it is better for us to act together right now."

Yuusuke ordered to allow the smaller group, who was still moving independently, to join the exploration party.

There were some expressions from mercenaries and adventurers, as if to say "naïve," but members of the Darkness God Corps understood that this was the way that Yuusuke acted towards others, and had immediately abided by the order and called out to the smaller group, beckoning them to come.

Even if they moved silently, both the beasts and the humans were able to detect one another through the divine arts aura. Hence, considering a huge battle, moving forward as one big group was a better choice than proceeding boldly.

Maybe because they had changed into a defensive formation, the evil beasts had kept their distance and did not show any signs of a counterattack.

"In the end, beasts are beasts. Modified beasts are probably mixed within, but the attitude of the advance party was probably the reason that they lost."

"Ah, but even with the strongest corps of Fonclanc… it's as you and your group members had said, they are definitely not just for show."

Everyone's initial expectations were much lower and such whispers stated to be exchanged between the mercenaries and the adventurers. Originally, forest beasts were cowardly beings. This display of strength was used to intimidate them and make them hesitate before attacking the humans.

Before long, the exploration party had arrived in front of the entrance of the hidden passage that was connected to the institute.

"Is this it?"

"This is really hard to see without looking for it."

"This smell… It reeks of blood."

A low, wide entrance to the underground had become visible below the entwined and twisted roots of the trees. It seemed that the doors had been destroyed and were

scattered around the entrance like some bloodstained ruins. Aisha groaned, looking into the dark entrance that looked like a ghost was about to come out of it.

It was already late and the sun had already set. It was jet black around them save for the rinlamps and the fire arts that provided the remaining light.

"Do we proceed forward like that, or do we build a camp here?"

"We can still go on."

"Even if we are planning to rest, I think it will be easier to ensure everyone's safety inside."

"All we did today was walking, we still have plenty of strength to go on."

Representatives from the mercenaries and adventurers groups were in favor of continuing the march. If they went in like that, their objective was to make a camp within the tunnel after Yuusuke had ascertained its safety and eat there.

"Argh!"

"This is somewhat…"

After descending down, the tunnel suddenly curved. Behind the corner they were met with hideous stench of decaying bodies and a spectacle of dead carcasses that likely belonged to the scientists, littered around the entire area. The women were the first to flee the scene, regardless if they were mercenaries or adventurers.

There was no way that they could simply advance through such a tunnel so wind arts users immediately began ventilating the underground structure. With Fonke acting as the leader for this task, endowment type wind arts users started clearing the putrid smell. There were a lot of capable wind users in this group so the task was proceeding smoothly.

"This is on an entirely different level."

"Yeah, it was bad enough in Gearhawk fortress, but the climate of this area made them decay that much faster."

Yuusuke and Vermeer were handing out the masks that were similar to those that they had used in the Gearhawk fortress while waiting for the wind users to complete their task. Shaheed had gathered offensive type water arts users and had been cleaning the entrance to the tunnel. Aisha, being a healing type water arts user, was walking around tending to the people that became sick from what was waiting for them down in the darkness.

"What is the status regarding the evil beasts?"

"Ah, Captain. Uhm, I they are mostly staying still… and they seem to be slowly leaving the area."

Isotta, the person in charge for the scout's group, slightly raised her voice and replied that the number of beasts in the vicinity had been gradually decreasing.

“There is a lot of us here, maybe they have fled?”

“It can be, I am not sure.”

Even if the beasts would flee from here, they would still be a threat to the travelers, who would be using the highway. However it seemed that there would be no problems if they left this problem to the regular army of Trent Rietta, responsible for blocking off the area.

“Yuusuke san, it seems that cleaning and ventilation of the entrance is complete.”

“Understood, I’ll be right there.”

Yuusuke answered Sun, who came to tell him of the completion of the assigned tasks, and went towards the tunnel entrance.

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The hidden passage seemed to have had been a natural cave before it was adapted to its current purpose. Floor, walls, and ceiling were adjusted and fortified with the earth arts, but it seemed that the stones were left to lay all around the floor.

Because of that, the indoors type map shift customization, which Yuusuke thought to use to instantly reach the institute, became impossible to use after the first glance at the tunnel.

He tried looking at his customization menu, but it seemed that the range of his ability had remained unchanged when he went underground.

“So we can only advance normally, eh?”

“Wouldn’t this be a perfect chance to test the vehicle that Captain had created for princess Violet?”

“Ah, that’s right. A small scale vehicle would surely be useful here.”

With the exception of perpetual engine that was running n gimmick function, the remainder of the vehicle could be made anywhere, as long as the required resources were available. The engine itself was compact and easy to carry around.

Yuusuke completely agreed to Fonke’s offer to utilize the resources that they had available. Feelings of enjoyment and comfort sometimes are the best motivators for innovation.

***

The group lined up and proceeded through the corridor, filled with the scent of the beasts. Their excrements could also be seen littered here and there. As expected, they had not encountered any evil beasts within the tunnel.

“They might not dare to approach such a big group after all.”

“There seemed to be several other entrances along the way. They might have escaped through there.”

Being alert all the time started weighing on the people within the party, however this was a situation when proceeding safely was the best course of action. Just when Yuusuke was about to notify the representatives about a break —

"Rooooaaaar–"

"?!"

"What was that?"

"Was that a roar of an evil beast?"

"I think I also heard a metallic like sound. Could there be someone fighting the evil beasts down here."

A sound, resembling a beast's roar echoed within the tunnel and it seemed that someone might have still been fighting deeper down. Immediately wind arts users used their arts to try and grasp what was happening ahead of the group.

"This is… Captain! It's a modified evil beast!"

"The situation?"

"There are humans fighting it … around four of them. They seem to be fighting three evil beasts. Ah one of the beasts just died."

The detail that Isotta could analyze the situation ahead in was not only due to her natural senses, but also because of the various buffs, bestowed by her uniform, that had strengthened her abilities.

Because of the divine arts obstruction aura that the modified beasts created around themselves, Isotta aside no other transmission type wind arts user could obtain any useful information from the area ahead. Although they were able to detect a battle and its approximate location, they were unable to identify the fighting sides or estimate their numbers.

They now admired Isotta, saying things such as "So this is the Evil God Corps," the girl that looked to be unreliable at first glance, wielding her arts with such accuracy and eyed the corps with envious glances. They would have never expected such skill from a girl that looked more like a child to them.

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Leaving the main force in a defensive formation, a rescue/reinforcements squad was formed and rushed towards the fight. Yuusuke, Sun, Aisha, and Fonke had formed the core of this squad, while three capable mercenaries and two adventurers had formed the vanguard. The former adventurer were amongst the three mercenaries, selected for this mission.

Relying on Fonke's movement speed buff, the rescue squad rushed down the tunnel. Before long, they spotted several burning torches lying on the floor. The flickering flames had illuminated the corner and shadows of people fighting the evil beasts were dancing on the walls. With a roar, a human swung his great sword and felled one of the beasts.

The very instant the thin obstruction aura that was covering the entire area had vanished. It seemed that the beast that was killed was a (can “of a” be used here?) modified type.

“These guys… aren’t they artless soldiers?”

“Gazettians? Why would they be in such a place?”

“Hmmm, you have managed to get here pretty quickly.”

The artless soldier, who turned his head at the mercenaries’ voice cleaned the blood of his huge silver sword and took a few practice swings as if admiring the weapon. Yuusuke’s group spontaneously met the eyes of the owner of the familiar voice from behind the vanguard, frozen in shock after unexpectedly meeting the artless soldiers.

At that time a high pitched shriek resounded in the tunnel.

“I’ve been too careless. There are still some beasts left.”

“A child?”

Yuusuke glanced towards the voice and saw a girl, dressed in seemingly traditional (ceremonial) clothes, standing beside the wall. An evil beast was attacking a girl that seemed to be of Elfiona’s age.

“Tsk! EXECUTE!”

Yuusuke immediately passed the vanguard by using the shift map. Although he only gained few meters by doing that, he was now able to trap the beast with the customized walls while rushing towards the girl.

“…Yuusuke? I see, that’s how it is.”

Shinha’s eyes were wide from astonishment after noticing Yuusuke’s presence, but he silently muttered something as if everything had fallen into their places.

Chapter 72: The Village Oracle

The investigation party members were wary of the Artless soldiers. Yuusuke ordered them to return back to the main group and deliver the order to the Darkness God Corps members in the rear group to come over to his location. Afterwards he walked towards Shinha's group while Vermeer and the others came running to join their Captain.

"It's been a while, Yuusuke."

"Yeah. But why would the King… come to such a place?"

Shinha was wielding a familiar great sword, wearing light armor, and had an unusual entourage with him. The person that also seemed to be an artless soldier was armed with a simple longsword and was wearing armor similar to the one that Thalys' companion had worn during the dance festival. Behind him were two young women with green and blue colored hair respectively, who seemed to be twins. The last member of Shinha's party was the child from before.

"I heard that you were staying in a nearby city. These beasts seem to be a difficult opponent for the divine arts users so we thinned them out a bit."

Shaheed shot a sharp glance towards Shinha and asked him, dubious that the King had said this as an excuse in order to approach his Captain.

"… Weren't you trying to hide the fact of the modified evil beasts?"

Gazzetta had previously replied "We know but we will not share the information" to Blue Garden's inquiry regarding the modified evil beasts which could be viewed as an attempt to use these beasts as tools of war.

Shaheed meant that this time Shinha had come this far on foot (as in sneaked in here). This was much more likely done to hide the fact of the modified evil beasts rather.

"Ah, there was that too."

"…"

Shinha simply brushed off Shaheed's accusations with a joke. The atmosphere became heavy as both groups stared at each other, somehow leaving Yuusuke out of this.

"How should I say it, why would you bring children to such a dangerous place?"

Hearing Yuusuke's question Shinha had shown a strained smile and glanced towards the person in question, who was yawning near the wall. At the same time Yuusuke's remaining group had appeared from the tunnel behind him.

"Yuusuke-dono!"

"We'll help you out in dealing with these guys."

"No no no, calm down guys we were just chatting."

Calming down the excited mercenaries Yuusuke tasked Shaheed and Vermeer to make

sure that none of those guys decided to go gung-ho and face off against Shinha.

"So, returning back to the topic… you said that you came here to back us up?"

"To be precise, we came here to protect you."

"Hmm…"

Shinha's own strength aside, artless soldiers who were living on a verge of battle their entire lives were also on an entirely different level. With the modified evil beasts as the enemy, such soldiers would become a reliable vanguard.

***

There were some former Nossentians amongst the adventurers and the mercenaries, and these guys had openly shown hostility towards the newcomers. Yuusuke, however, somehow managed to persuade these guys to accept Shinha's proposal.

Currently, only those in the Darkness God Corps knew of the fact that Shinha was the King of Gazzetta, and considering the situation they had decided to keep this fact secret. If this were to spread amongst the other members, doubtlessly those, who would aim to take his life, would appear within this group.

"Then, let's begin by sharing what we know."

Shinha's group had entered the tunnel from another entrance that was close to the institute. Before reaching the entrance they seemingly traveled above ground, disposing of the evil beasts that got in their way. They had also tried to enter the institute but it was sealed off, hence they entered the underground passage.

When the talks focused on the current state of the institute – the topic that also concerned the mercenaries and the adventurers – they had also joined in although they treated Shinha's group as filthy barbarians (胡散臭げ).

"According to the researcher, one of the emergency exits wasn't completely sealed off."

There was a possibility that the only remaining entrance to the research facility had become a den for the evil beasts. If left alone, the entire institute would eventually become a huge den or, more accurately, an impregnable fortress for the evil beasts.

"It would be for the best to secure the institute as fast as possible and seal off any remaining exits."

"How much does Gazzetta knows about the institute?"

"We only knew about the research subjects and the scale of the institute. The current situation occurred just when we were about to investigate it."

Everyone nodded, confirming the information. Gazzetta also barely had any information regarding the internal situation of the facility. Since they had not sent an established investigation team, the treasures of the institute were still likely untouched.

The Darkness God Corps had the right of choice concerning the valuable items, but since the facility was huge, the others still expected to make a fortune from items like

experiment utensils or small pieces of equipment. This made the tension rise amongst the treasure hunting adventurers.

After exchanging the various information, everyone agreed that there was no need to move on forward today and decided to rest where they stood. Yuusuke blocked off the passages and created a safe area for them to rest. He also created tables and chairs so everyone could relax.

The gimmick fans were also installed at the top of the walls that somewhat alleviated the stench of blood and beasts. With that, a dangerous passage, full of wandering evil beasts, started to resemble a fairly decent restaurant or bar that one could find in a city when looking for a place to relax.

Some of the adventurers had gathered together and were talking about the usefulness of such an ability when exploring the depths of the earth, marveling at the rotating blades of the fan, installed at the top of the room.

"Ah, that's the divine art of the Captain of the Darkness God Corps…"

"Uhm, the power of the Hero of Fonclanc… is it actually a tactics based ability?"

Mercenary captains were trying to ascertain the truth behind Yuusuke's ability. They had heard about the "giant walls that he could create", "building a fortress in an instant", and "being able to redeploy the troops with ease". Witnessing his power from this close they understood that it was not just a special divine art that had an overwhelming offensive power nor the art that combined several different effects to defeat the enemy.

It was a supportive art that adjusted to the situation to aid one's allies. Moreover it had a fairly large area of effect for a strategic type divine art.

["We wouldn't be able to copy it even if we managed to grasp the types of the arts that he's using?"]

After whispering between themselves, the mercenary captains had arrived at the same conclusion as Zeshald – Yuusuke was able to wield all types of divine arts.

***

Every group had gathered around their own tables. Between the idle chatter and discussions the Darkness God Corps had also talked about how they should treat Shinha's group from now on.

Since the Darkness God Corps were the core of this investigation party, their duty included sorting out the fine details between the smaller groups.

"I think that we will not be attacked by the evil beasts until we reach the institute." (Yuusuke)

"I agree, I told you that we had killed the beasts on our way here." (Shinha)

"While that may be true, the reason is different." (Ayuukas)

Shinha was interrupted by the girl, wearing some sort of traditional clothes. She had long white hair with a distinct purple shade. Her white eyes, framed by neatly trimmed

bangs, looked childish yet were also tinged with experience, giving her face a grown up looks. She introduced herself as Ayuukas.

From her tone and manner of speaking Yuusuke assumed that her status was close to Violet's. Judging from what he had seen since a little while ago, the white soldiers, who seemed to be of high status within Shinha's army, treated this girl with a lot of respect.

"What do you mean?"

"You are the reason."

As she was saying that, Ayuukas suddenly jumped off the chair, approached Yuusuke, and pointed at him while peering into the black eyes.

"You are the reason that the evil beasts are keeping their distance. It seems that little Shin was overprotective towards you."

"Hey, what do you mean by that, grandma?"

"Ha? Grandma…?" (Yuusuke)

["Such a small child definitely can't be a grandmother,"] although Yuusuke was thinking about what Ayuukas had said, he could not believe Shinha's rude words and blurted that out. Shinha was about to explain it, but the girl was a little bit faster as she answered with a curtsy.

"Boring stuff aside, I might look like this, but I am three thousand and four years old."

"…? TH, THREE THOUSAND?"

"My name is Ayuukas Ikdout."

The girl continued talking, explaining that she had inherited the powers of an ancient Evil God. Because of her immortality, the descendants of the White Tribe had started worshipping her as a village shaman. It could be said that she herself was the embodiment of the three thousand years of history of the Evil Gods.

Yuusuke seemed ready to pass it as a joke, but Shinha confirmed that the girl was indeed serious.

"She looked like this ever since I was just a brat. It seems that she had also taken care of my father as well as my grandfather the same way."

"I had also taken care of a king three generations ago even after he had grown up, in various ways…"

Ayuukas giggled after she finished as Shinha looked away as if he remembered something disgusting. Yuusuke's companions were dumbfounded, hearing something that was hard to believe.

"Going back on the topic, the evil beasts are wary of the presence of the Evil God."

According to the shaman, the Evil God was an existence that was purposely given godlike powers, and could even be called as an envoy summoned to bring about the

changes into the world.

“The beasts are able to sense the special aura of the Evil God and are probably afraid of it. Well, your power also affects everything around you, and might be adding to the effect of the aura.”

“Uhm, do you mean to say that… the reason why we weren’t attacked by the evil beasts ever since we left the city was –“

“Because you were there. These evil beasts were tamed by humans, don’t you think that they would view the group that you brought along as mere bait?”

The evil beast that was attacking Ayuukas before had also seemed to flinch and become wary when Yuusuke had approached it.

Yuusuke was desperate to stop the evil beast back then. When he calmly thought about that now, there was no way for him to make it in time no matter how many times he used shift map back then.

”Hmm… in a sense it seems logical, but can it be the other way around?”

At that time Shinha had expected for the Darkness God Corps to arrive, but expected the mercenaries to struggle to catch up. It did not seem that the mercenaries were protected by Yuusuke’s aura, rather it felt like Yuusuke opened them a path through the beasts.

Asking this question, Shaheed seemed to come to what was troubling him since some time ago.

“That means, the reason why the beasts didn’t attack us while we were destroying the nest that time was because the Captain was with us?”

The first time they had fought the modified evil beasts was during the forest incident. That also meant that it was no sheer luck that they hadn’t encountered any evil beasts during their friendship visit to Nossentes and during their subsequent escape either.

Having come to understand so much about the Evil God in mere hours Yuusuke felt that there was much more that he wanted to hear about the role he was meant to play in this world, but the people of the investigation group had finished their rest and seemed to be ready to move out.

Ayuukas used the brief instance while Yuusuke had diverted his attention towards the investigation party and softly whispered into his ear – “You are welcome to visit my home if you want to hear about it in detail.” The “home” that she was referring to were the Divine Halls, located at the top floor of the tower, standing in the center of Patrucia Nost.

“Uhm…” (Yuusuke)

“To say it bluntly, don’t judge her by her looks.” (Shinha)

“Just because I am three thousand years old doesn’t mean that I have to behave like one.” (Ayuukas)

The remaining members of the corps became vigilant when Ayuukas invited Yuusuke to Gazzetta in such a carefree way.

***

The preparations to leave the camp were underway with the tables, chairs, and the defensive walls returning down into the floor. Ayuukas extended her both arms towards Shinha.

“What is it?”

“Don’t we still have to walk until the institute? Shouldn’t you be considerate of me?”

Ayuukas seemed to still be tired so she pressed Shinha for a princess cradle. Quickly looking at each other, Shinha’s soldiers quickly turned towards the tunnel and retreated some distance from their king as if to say “That’s your job, we are just your escort.” Shinha could only look at them angrily and sigh.

“Don’t you have an immortal body?”

“It may be immortal, but that doesn’t change the fact that I’m still tired. I can’t do anything about it, you just accept that.”

Shinha held Ayuukas in his hands and walked off towards the institute, pretending not to notice the looks that Yuusuke and the others had thrown at him.

“…hey, Shinha?”

“Don’t say a word…”

Chapter 73: Facility control strategy

After spending an entire night leading the investigation group through the underground passageway, the Darkness God Corp had arrived at the magical beast facility. At the top floor of Volance Palace within the king's private quarters, King Esvobus was having a secret meeting with Reifold.

"It seems that his subordinates had misunderstood his situation."

The observation had began since the meeting between Yussuke and Reifold at the nearby forest of Rufk, this answer was derived the other day through Reifold during the Driadria incident. Yuusuke who was merely a commoner who was given these "powers". From the old stories that were being passed down from various places, the "Evil God" would always make use and understand his "power".

"About that thing~~"

"Eh, I haven't spoken to anyone yet. But...I believe that they have already gotten the required power"

"Gazzetta is it…."

"Also the Blue Garden Queen. Originally, the power she is wielding should have been broken up and drained away."

King Esvosbus let out a sigh as he began to understand their said actions. Reifold using his illusion technique on Yuusuke was not particularly the King's instruction.

The acceptance towards the facilities blockade mission was ultimately in a form of persuasion of assumption. Reifold was personally curious about the existence of the evil god, so he tried to do a simple test.

Being summoned from some other world, Yuusuke was seen as a commoner who possessed the "power of the evil god". Zeshald, while concerned about the "awakening of the Evil God", chose not to voice out his concerns since he didn't have enough information.

King Esvobus reminded Reifold to not do any more rashful interfering and to increase the surveillance around Yuusuke as a form of bodyguard.

The sealing of the hidden passages of Yuusuke's mansion was almost done. Soldiers, whose sole duty were to monitor the mansion, were unceremoniously added in.

"If they were to be taken and brainwashed by Gazzetta, it will become a big problem."

"....that would be the worst case scenario in many different ways."

"The history of Kaltcio was build on the Gods competing using God's pieces for supremacy, you are no exception in the act."

"To desire or not, is it…. Do not rely on Zeshald now."

The religious truth about the 4 gods which Queen Risha had said. Volnar – god of fire,

Shalnar – god of water, Zalnar – god of earth, Fyolnar – god of wind.

Each of the different Divine art's symbol of existence are represented by divine art users before the divine faith was created. The Nossentes's Divine councils ancestors, the ones who had founded the faith of the 4 great gods, they created the concept of blessing powers to the divine arts people and murdered the existence of the evil god wizard, and under their leadership, they created the faith of the 4 great gods to lead the people.

By using the power of the evil god, one could become the supreme ruler of that era. That is as an enemy, an ally, a terminus point, a starting point, an object of protection, a target to be defeated, the era will be shaped by that evil god with the various ways it knows.

"What kind of existence is Yuusuke, is he an avatar of the Evil God?"

Noon, one of the investigating group which arrived at the magical beast facility appeared to be on the grounds in preparation for the facility search. In order to secure and established a base of operations within the safety of the facility, they cleared away the weeds near the entrance to secure their resting place.

As Yusuke arrived, he immediately grasped the rough scale of the facility. A natural cave had been used to house the base, with many of the underground passageway being human-made, using the customization menu, he could view the entire structure map of the facility from rooms to passages.

"Captain, the corps preparations are all done."

"Understood. I'll open the entrance lane inform the first group."

For the capture procedures, he used the customization menu to block all other entrances. After blocking up a certain range of the facility they began to push forward a search. Not knowing what would happened other than the connecting man-made object, they began relying on Shinha's group in that aspect.

First they began their exploration by scoping out the first floor's passages, which extended from the entrance to the interior hallways, from there they will extend the passage horizontally and create a wall for a blockade. After securing the passages, they would then begin searching the individual rooms.

Because they couldn't enter all at once, each group made a rotation cycle and their members will take turns to be responsible. The smaller groups will head into the safe and secured rooms to scavenge for remnants, measures were being taken so as there will not be any group that would move without permission.

"The first floor passage have been safely secured, please confirm."

"Ngh, shall I open this side rooms?"

"The safety is confirmed~, somehow there is a guard resting place, isn't it a good thing ~ wait boy why are you complaining."

"Haha, well next."

The Darkness God Corps was commanding the troops on the surface while Yuusuke was setting up the blockade region within the facility, in order to control the situation, Vermeer and Fonke had to make round trips on site to the surface as messengers.

Due to the Evil God's presence the magical beasts didn't seem to be approaching, no one understood what was going on. But, they are still being vigilant as it is the basic foundation.

And at that rate, most of the rooms in front of the passage on the first floor were being searched and explored without encountering any trouble. Once the first floor was fully explored, they began preparation for the exploration of the facility basement as the next location.

"Captain, somehow it seems that there are two magical beast down the front and back of the right aisle."

"The right aisle huh….isn't that the closest place that is connected to the stairs going down?"

For the sake of safety, he first had to set a blockade wall on the right aisle. After affirming the safety of the left aisle, he would deploy the troops. After deploying the troops in front of the aisle, next he would open the right aisle and subdue the magical beasts.

"Don't you think that if we were to take over wouldn't it be faster?"

"Don't be rash…."

Yuusuke declined Shinha's proposal to help, as he didn't want to stand out. Although they have agreed to cooperate with Gazzetta, they were never in a comfortable position because in their homeland Gazzetta is seen as a hostile group. And they didn't want too much stimuli.

Shinha's group headed back up to the surface for lookout duty, as the majority were with it.

"That said, that in the one in a thousand chance it becomes dangerous, we would like you to at least standby in the entrance of the passage."

"Fue, alright."

Infront of the wall towards the right aisle, the explorer group gathered for their first ever anti-magical beast battle, they began to gather and prepare themselves, especially those with experience. Since they had watched Yuusuke's group heading into the facility, the strike force were making preparations to support in any situation if anything had occurred.

Just as planned they deployed the divine arts attackers on the left aisle for a simultaneous attack. Even if the beast were not killed by the range attacks, considerable damage would have been done and the vanguard would be able to

complete the subjugation on the weakened beast.

"The placement of the attacking group is completed."

"Okay, I'll open up the blockade."

With Yuusuke's signal, the wall began to lit up as it disappeared along with the small light particles. From the darkness of the right aisle, the growling of the magical beast could be heard. After confirming the target's location, the first flame art attacks were released.

After 2 waves of flame bullets were fired, the wind blades followed through, last but not least lumps of ice which were formed by freezing the water ball, were being shot.

"It's coming!"

"Be careful of the thing behind it!"

Two magical beast in this small aisle. Due to it's huge body, most of the surprise attacks had landed on the front magical beast, while the one behind was practically uninjured and rushed towards the attackers. The vanguards used strengthening divine arts and raised their weapons to welcome the assault, while the second wave of attacks came flying past from behind.

The approaching beast pulled up his claws from the floor and lowered its stance to avoid the oncoming flame bullets and wind blades as it jumped up into the air.

"oOOOOOO!"

"Oi Bourem, don't plunge in unreasonably!"

The former adventurer lept out from the left aisle to the main passage to face the magical beast head on.

Shaking off his companion who tried to stop him, he slashed at the flank of the magical beast. However, due to the huge body and robust fur, his sword only inflicted a slight cut as it rebounded. Then, the beast which was injured by the first volley of attack began to approach.

"Quickly get down! If you're there we can't attack using Divine arts!"

"Uoooo!"

"Damn…. let's go and support! Restrain the wounded one."

The moment the vigorous and uninjured magical beast landed, it changed its target towards the powerless prey. His fellow group members were trying to cover Bouremzap the bold former adventurer who had recklessly rampaged, as he tried to restrain the magical beast.

The small open space in the aisle suddenly became a close quarter combat~~

"Shinha!"

"Ou"

Shinha and his artless warrior immediately responded to Yuusuke's call. The artless warrior took the opportunity and used his shield to slam the magical beast snout while striking down on the crown of it's head with his sword as the mercenaries cast their divine arts and used their spears to stab the magical beast and seal it's movement.

Due to that powerful strike, it caused the magical beast to fell back on it's butt as though it was in a "sitting" position.

"Now!"

Without a moment's delay the artless warrior pulled back as the multi fire of divine arts was released onto the stuck beast to finish it off.

On the other side, the magical beast which was slashed by Bouremzap used its claws and lashed at the sword. It then adopted a lower posture with its fangs ready to strike at any time, but suddenly it jumped back as if knowing that there was danger.

'Oh, this fella is adapting."

Shinha who was holding onto the white sword came slicing in, while judging that this magical beast had battle experience with humans due to his agile movement.

Tools were created by humans, as we are animals which have vulnerable bodies that needs protecting, to counter this powerlessness we had to gain powerful strength to fight against wild beasts. But even so, to use a blade against the ironhide and the piercing teeths of a magical beast with a human body that is fragile and easily broken.

Shinha drew back his sword which had sank into the floor and began to set up his stance, as the magical beast backed away slowly while growling.

Wondering where did this fragile human who wore craggy leather armor and didn't have any presence who butted into the fight. As it believed that the fight would end with it chewing him into a thousand pieces. This was the look that was currently representing the thoughts of the magical beast.

"Uooooo~~"

Changing its killing target to Shinha from Bouremzap, as the magical beast evaded by jumping back away from Shinha who had used his sword skill at it. Bouremzap had been tossed aside by the beast as it evade Shinha's strike, his fellow group members rush over to him. At the same time, the magical beast kicked the floor and leapt towards Shinha.

"Ngg!"

Buo~o~tsu the sound of the wind being cut by the great sword that was raised over his head as Shinha seized the opportunity to strike towards the ceiling with all his might at the magical beast which was currently in the air. The concept of "exception" of the powerless human, did not exist in the magical beast mind.

Perplexed to the unknown damage that was being thrown towards it, the magical beast was struggling to try and balance from the fall. And then, the great sword that was swung in full strength and driven into it. *Zushin* the sound of impact, the magical beast was skewered to the floor.

Merely 2 sword strikes. If Bouremzap had not recklessly attacked, they would not have discovered the artless warrior's strength, those that regarded Gazzetta as hostile began to have a tense expression.

Being hostile to Gazzetta, equals confronting the artless warriors. 'Do you have the guts?'

"Oi! Why did you take my prey!"

"Stop Bourem! Calm down."

The silence was broke by the mercenary member who remonstrated with an angry voice. Bouremzap was in a current state of agitation due to the appearance of Shinha's group who supported and finished off the magical beast, while the other mercenaries and adventurer group had doubtful voices of being insensitive.

Realising it would result in an inevitable death, Bouremzap's fellow mate pinned him down and whispered something into his ears before he reached Shinha which caused his face to tighten. In an instant it turned silent. Within the tension filled air, Shinha and his entourage headed back to the entrance of the passage.

"Thanks for the hard work…..wait did you say something?"

"Easy this kind of standard is not a big deal…..but, to employ that kind of ally isn't he crude?"

"Ng~well, that was certainly a dangerous atmosphere."

Somehow it seems that Bouremzap had calmed down, as Yuusuke looked towards the mercenary group and took a step back.

The other Darkness God Corps members more or less knows about his situation, while risking everyone else to danger, it's hard to blame who was in the wrong here.

Afterwards, the dead body of the magical beasts were processed and the secured first floor was being restructured as a base of operation for the basement exploration. While Yuusuke was delegating a room for each of the groups, the leader of the mercenary group Bouremzap belonged to came to apologize.

"I am very sorry. I will prevent reckless actions from happening in the future battle, please do not exclude us from the exploration team."

According to the mercenary group leader, he had once been in a dangerous place, due to that he trained to increase his skills as an adventurer and became a pillar of the group, up until now they had been closing their eyes towards his recklessness.

This was his first time being reckless by freaking out, thus the members were bewildered.

"Well, it's not unreasonable."

“At this rate, sooner or later he might get killed in a fight with the magical beast.”

The mercenary leader promised that Bourem would come over personally to apologize and he headed back to his group. And then, Yuusuke explained and summarized to the former adventurer Bouremzap, that Shinha’s gang had come to investigate the situation in the woods.

“I understand your resolution. But more than putting yourself in the face of battle, of course there must also be proper timing to separate from your fellow comrades.”

“Ng~, I thought there wasn’t any problem for a brief split.”

Yuusuke growled at Shinha’s quite unsparing words that came out of his mouth after some dry thinking. Ayuuka sighed while listening to the argument of the two.

“It’s not easy to get accustomed to losing close friends and loved one. In order not to be driven into insanity one must deceive their heart.”

This is the fate of the one who had to live for eternity. An endless repeat of separation. As one who knew its sorrow, her words held weight.

“In any case, I am feeling hungry. Is dinner ready yet?”

“....”

“....”

Chapter 74: The first day's search

While the magical beast facility investigation group had just began preparations for dinner. Violet headed towards the noble district in Sanc Adiet right after her lesson had finished as she had heard that Razshia's group had returned home.

The servants of Yuusuke's mansion were busy preparing for the sudden visit by the princess, however Violet didn't bother with the formalities as she advanced into the mansion.

"Shia! Are you here?"

"Ah~ I am opening the door now!"

As Violet stop in front of the basement research room door. On the other side of the door, the rustling sound of moving luggage could be heard.

In front of the stairs leading down to the basement's research room, the servant who had lead Violet up to the location had a stiff expression as Razshia received her.

"It's okay~"

"Umm"

As Violet entered the room that was opened for her, she ordered the servants to prepare tea & cake in the underground research lab where the moss cultivation room was.

The cultivation room was lined up with soil, moss and water containers that had been collected from the forest of root trees. Despite having plenty of things to see, Violet immediately jumped into the topic of the souvenir, while Razshia became a little worried.

Understanding the Violet's look of dismissal, the servant that brought the tea and cake immediately left.

"Don't let anyone approach, keep a lookout on top of the stairs."

"I understand."

"As expected of Princess-sama."

"So, what's up? Did something happen?

Razshia began speaking about the events that happened in Driadria, Reilfod had used "illusion wind" on Yuusuke, in order to involve the Darkness God Corps to personally be involved in the modded magical beast incident.

On the way back home in order to avoid "unnecessary confusion and trouble", this time Reifold had tried to hush Sorzak from speaking about the incident, so as to not expose his actions behind the Darkness God Corps participation in the divine arts army, but unlike Sorzak, Razshia is Yuusuke's personal slave, so Reifold's deed would not be enough to silence her.

"Hmmpt, that fella…."

"Yuusuke doesn't seem to want to be concerned with the magical beast incident."

"I was quite surprised by the decision that Yuusuke made regarding the magical beast, to think that it was actually like that."

Knowing how manipulative her father King Esvobus was, Violet folded her arms and began thinking.

"Shia, thanks for telling me this. Next time, if something goes wrong around Yuusuke and it's being concealed, inform me."

She sipped her tea while saying so, while the topic about Rinval, DriaDria city and Trent Rietta's souvenirs will have to wait as Violet hastily left Yuusuke's mansion after that.

Violet who had returned to the palace, headed towards Krielov's room to "discuss about something" that she had heard from Razshia, while seeking information about Reifold's activities.

As the princess who is interested in anything, being interested in the elusive and mysterious Reifold isn't unexpected at all. Krielov came to this conclusion while he began telling her the information he knew about him.

"I, myself doesn't know anymore than this ~~ this morning he seems to be summoned to the King's private room."

"Secret talks huh?"

"Well, it's that type of work…. Well, he often receive secret mission from the king."

Krielov began to explained that the intelligence reports and consultation had occurred quite often. "Fumu" after thinking elaborately for a moment Violet opened her mouth and asked.

"Erm, Krielov. Do you think that the current soldiers attached to the Darkness God Corps can be appointed as palaces knights?"

"Palace knights is it? Why suddenly such a decision?"

"It's because of the achievements of the the Darkness God Corps members, isn't there a problem of keeping them as a normal troop forever?"

"Hmm…., it's true that those people have racked up quite an achievement."

In order to become a palace knight, one must have high divine arts power as a form of adequate status. Although the Darkness God Corps members have certainly achieved many accomplishments, their overall divine arts power is below average, almost all of them were comparable to the general public.

"Those accomplishments were achieved under Yuusuke's power, frankly speaking it might be difficult."

"I see…. Well, let's think of some other ways."

After that, Violet could be seen fiddling with a Rin lamp after her dinner, Krielov saw that and thought "being her usual curious self" and headed back to his room.

On the other side, the preparations for dinner were advancing smoothly on the first floor of the facility, as they made room and moved the required equipment into the facility. For the dinner, simple food for everyone was prepared, with just the tables and chairs being provided.

Within the group, from the corner a person called out to Sun who was carrying a table. Dozen of small groups of people were searching for leftovers in the explored rooms. It seems that they had found some cracks behind the shelves of the room, but lacked the manpower to move it.

They called out to Sun who happened to be working nearby. Considering the Artless' physical prowess, including the strength ring she was wearing, Sun's physical strength is the highest within the Darkness God Corps, thus she believed that she was expected to do the heavy lifting. Therefore, their request didn't seem strange to her.

Looking back, Yuusuke was arranging a meeting for tomorrow with all the different group leaders. As the first floor's security was completed. In order to not bother Yuusuke with his work, Sun went to help them on her own accord.

"Hey Blue(Aoi), isn't this bad after all?"

"Stupid, what's there to worry about, the opponent is an artless."

"But she's a darkness god corps attendant right?"

These people were whispering, as Sun came to the resting room after passing by the facility entrance and monitoring post. Sun who came to help was a little startled when 2 of the 3 people of the group stood up.

"Erm...where are the shelves?"

"Eh? Ah, along that side of the wall…."

One of them pointed towards the heavy looking shelves, as the 3 people group up together and as one of them protested.

"Oi. what's going on here! Isn't this the Darkness God Corp's attendant?"

"Like I said, it doesn't matter who is it as long as they are an artless, we just have to pay her 2 to 3 yellow crystals (shouka) after the job."

"I got a feeling it will cost a green crystal (shouka)…."

"Isn't it cheaper to hire a wild singer on the streets?"

Their main aim to lure Sun in was to ask for sexual pleasure, though there were some opinion on the Darkness God Corp's attendant, seeing that she was a lady artless

attendant and it was part of her duties, as they believed that it was alright to pay her for her services afterwards.

It's not uncommon to have 1 or 2 singers join a huge expedition, as this investigation group which comprises many elites groups, each and every one of them have seriousness in their face and wasn't here for fun.

At least at the end of the day they wish to embrace a woman to sleep, in such a mercenary group that consist of many adventurer group, there weren't women without muscles and wasn't ferocious amongst them.

With the exception of the people from Gazzetta and the Darkness God Corps~~

"There weren't any others around, we didn't have much of a choice."

Like stupid idiots wanting some comfort, as they were a small and weak group they would most likely be rejected. Thus they turned to more forceful methods. His friends understood his uncontrollable desires.

Hastily, he approached Sun from behind, but he received a strong hit on his head and was knocked out.

"Ah! I'm sorry, are you alright?"

The figure of Sun carrying the big shelf that was along the wall could be seen. As she couldn't properly balance the shelf, the top hit the guy(bug) on his head. In one sense, his height had caused this disaster.

The group were dumbfounded when Sun was able to move the shelf by herself which had required 2 of their biggest guy to carry. So far as it goes, her being able to move the shelf was true.

In any case, earlier the previous day before they departed from DriaDria, Yuusuke had gave Sun a customized set of attendant uniform, "ring of strength", "belt of strength", "attendant uniform of protection".

After shifting the big shelf when she was about to nurse the fainted guy, a dubious voice from outside the room could be heard.

"Oi, what are you guys doing here."

"Ah, you….the mercenary group's….."

"Na, I wanted to borrow the singing attendant for awhile…"

Bouremzap face darkened as his eyes sharpened and said as the situation seemed to have become grim. Hearing herself being called a singer, Sun's face turned red. As she immediately distanced herself from the fainted guy she was about to nurse.

"Hey you guys… do you know that girl is the Darkness God Corps captain's lover?"

"What!?"

"Lover!"

Their eyes turned 180 degrees, as Sun's face blushed even harder due to another kind of meaning. This small group of adventurers face began to turn green and discolored. Never had they thought it was the captain of the Darkness God Corp's lover and they began to panic.

"Sorry, sorry we're very sorry!"

"Please, please keep this a secret…."

One by one they lowered their head to appeal, Sun on the other hand didn't know what to do as the words doesn't seem to come out from her mouth, Bouremzap step up and came in with a timely help.

To avoid being reported to the Darkness God Corp's captain, they were to receive "punishment" for their attempted crime which was stopped by Bouremzap, as Sun nodded in agreement.

Later on, Sun who had returned to the Darkness God Corp area explained to Yuusuke, and it would be settled with them receiving some sort penalty. Yuusuke who handled it just like that made Sun a little lonely with the expectation of him being a little angry.

While thinking so, although he seem to be calmingly customizing, the table and chairs which appeared seem to be made for giants like a work of art, as Sun was unintentionally laughing.

"Captain, please calm down."

"No, calm down? No problem no problem."

"This ~ feels ~ scary."

"This is definitely chaos…."

"Ah, but…..this chair, might be fashionable…."

"Isotta, you…."

The streamline shape which suddenly ran wild seemed to have drawn Isotta's interest, while Aisha had a doubtful expression.

"Sorry for the trouble caused."

After dinner, as the exploration group were all getting ready, Bouremzap came over to the Darkness God Corps. Due to the earlier incident, the apology was accepted smoothly.

As expected the rampage was caused by the losing of his comrade, thus he couldn't control his feelings well in front of magical beasts.

"Try your best to control yourself."

"Ah…., I will not show such unsightly behaviour again."

After that, he looked over near the area of the Darkness God Corp where Shinha's group were setting up their sleeping area.

"What's up? If you want to say something say it."

"....I, want to become stronger."

"Fun...talk with your present pals first. After settling everything, come to Gazzetta anytime."

To be trained by Shinha in Gazzetta style of sword fighting, Bouremzap nodded in silent.

"What a hardworking king."

"Che."

After securing a talent, the single minded King smiled briefly towards the little tease by the Darkness God Captain before heading to bed. He took the shaman, who pretended to slip into his bed and placed her on his chest before falling asleep. Their safety was left for the king's aides who took turns in guarding the sleeping pair.(this sounds wrong kek)

"I'm also going to sleep," said Yuusuke and enveloped himself in the sleeping bag that had become a sort of a symbol of the Evil God Corps.

With that, the first day of the Evil Beasts Research Facility exploration had ended.

Chapter 75: Sealing the Institute

(Note: Vanguard is made of Shinha, his escort (White tribe Soldiers), Bouremzap, melee combat proficient adventurers/mercenaries. Due to a lot of cluttering involved naming the entire group each time it's mentioned I'll call it Shinha's group/vanguard.)

~Investigation, second day~

The investigation was being carried out in the underground floors, as well as the first floor. There was little danger since the area was sealed off by the protective walls, and the rooms were opened in an orderly fashion. Most of the facilities underground were laboratories that should've contained a large amount of treasures.

After descending the stairs, one of the members had found a broken magical flute amid a pool of blood.

Using wind arts, the group was able to confirm eight beasts in the underground floors, two of which seemed to be modified and were loitering around in the backmost room, which was probably the dining room of the facility.

"I think I am detecting a nest down there as well."

"A nest in the dining room… I have a bad feeling about this."

Bloodstains and signs of corpses being dragged could be seen all around the passage and both of these traces led to the canteen. Considering what had happened in the forest, the slain researchers here were likely dragged off to the nest to feed the young.

"I wish we could leave the vanguard to Shinha's party again."

"I don't mind it this way either, this seems to be a quick and easy path."

There were two evil beasts in the first floor passage that were unexpectedly hard to take down. Not counting Bouremzap's chaotic movements, it seemed likely that long ranged projectile divine arts and defensive buffs on the vanguard might not be sufficient to win the fight.

Afterwards, even those who were hostile towards the Gazzetians had changed their opinions, and had no more qualms towards the Artless soldiers joining the vanguard.

"Well then, let's try our best and avoid getting any injuries throughout the day!"

Yuusuke shouted vigorously without a shade of doubt in his words.

"Y-yeah?"

Adventurers' reply was half-hearted, the fellows unable to comprehend the reason behind these words. Thus the exploration of the basement of the institute had begun.

The smell in the underground was as awful as in the hidden passage before the venting, thus Yuusuke had previously installed gimmick ventilators in the numerous vents that were arranged around the facility in order to alleviate the stench of blood and rotting flesh. They entered the underground when the air had become breathable.

The investigation was proceeding smoothly. Because of the Gazzetians battle prowess and splendid performance as the vanguard, the party managed to avoid any dangerous confrontation and easily dealt with the evil beasts. After securing the passage, the party had started exploring the laboratories.

"The various chemicals spread around the previous room looked pretty dangerous."

"It seemed to affect our senses."

"In that case, should we stop here?"

Entering one of the rooms with numerous cages lining the walls, one of the adventurers had suddenly collapsed. It was nearly noon and this was the first time that they had experienced a slight accident after clearing most of the rooms in the underground floor.

"Only one room remains."

"There is no mistake, this is a canteen. Look, there are even plates laying around the entrance."

"Ah, I also have a bad feeling about this."

The canteen was a large room, located next to the room with the cages. The beasts in the canteen seemed to be modified thus there was no guarantee that the divine arts would be effective on them. To kill them, the party would have to rely entirely on Shinha and the vanguard group.

Assuming battle stance, Shinha suddenly looked towards the support group in the back lines and called out to Yuusuke.

"Yuusuke, would you let him join the vanguard? I swear I will keep him safe."

"Even if you are saying that… well if he doesn't mind, I will not hold him."

Hearing this, Shinha looked at Bouremzap. The fellow had spent the entire day in the backlines and was taken aback by the recent development. However he soon regained his composure, and with a vigorous nod, accepted the invitation.

"I'll do it!"

Last night he had talked with his company and told them that he would be leaving the mercenary group after this job and accept the invitation to go to Gazzetta.

After finishing the preparations, Shinha's vanguard group was ready to storm the room. Wind arts users had pinpointed the accurate locations of the beasts through a slight gap in the defensive walls that Yuusuke had erected during the preparation, and the party had agreed on the timing after the walls would be taken down.

"One of them, is farther in the back… the other one is near the entrance… ah! The one in the back had started to move."

"Give us a sign when the two of them join up, that will signal our attack."

Soon Isotta gave the signal and Shinha changed into the room along with his escort,

followed by Bouremzap. A moment later, the rest of the vanguard followed them. Fire arts users supported the vanguard by illuminating the room and covering their flanks.

"Understand that a sword is not a tool to kill the enemy, neither is it a tool to protect the ally. It's simply a thing to be swung down."

"Eh?"

"You can cut your enemy with a sword, you can also protect someone using it, but the result is not decided by the sword. It is merely a consequence of its wielder using it."

"…"

"Look at me (using the sword), burn the movements into your memory, make your body remember them!"

"O-ok."

Finishing a course of soldier's philosophy to Bouremzap, Shinha violently charged at the modified evil beasts and swung his sword with a berserker's fervor. The beast had tried to intercept the sword with its fangs, losing one them. With a flash, another fang had flown in the air alongside Shinha.

Using the momentum of the spin, Shinha swung his sword downwards and got a direct hit onto the beast's head. The swing was not sufficient to kill the beast, but its head hit the floor with enough force to break the jaw.

Shinha then swung his sword to the opposite direction and hit the beast's neck, severing its head.

The sight had sent shivers down Bouremzap's spine. But he was not alone, everyone was made speechless by "Shinha's all-out fighting style."

It felt that if his opponent were a human instead of a modified evil beast, nothing would save him from being turned into a lump of flesh.

"Oh oh, Shinha sure is lively today~"

"Uhm, Yuusuke-san, aren't you scared?"

"Captain, how can you remain so calm before this?"

Sun and Aisha voiced the feelings that Shinha's fight had instilled in everyone. Shinha's swordsmanship had intimidated the Darkness God Corps members as strongly as the other members of the investigation group.

Moreover the corps were knights of Fonclanc, one of the major powers amongst the divine arts users, and no one could deny a possibility that they would have to confront Gazzetta sometime in the future. Even if other soldiers in Gazzetta army could not be compared to Shinha, no one was able to shake the sense of danger out of their minds.

"I have seen it once already when I went to that village with Hivodir at night." (Reference to Ch. 38)

“Aaah!” Yuusuke’s mention made everyone in the corps remember the mission where Yuusuke and Shinha fought off the armed group, led by Volmes, that was attacking artless villages in Fonclanc. Shinha’s foes, even those that manage to survive, were severely maimed.

If not for Yuusuke’s customization that restored the bodies to their original state, most of them would’ve remained unidentifiable lumps of meat.

While the support group was reminiscing the said incident, artless soldiers, along with the rest of the vanguard had managed to deal with the second modified beast.

***

After disposing of the nest near the kitchen, the room was also sealed off. As expected, numerous corpses were scattered around the next room, and although the ventilation fans were customized inside the room, they could not rid of the putrid smell.

Yuusuke had blocked the emergency exit at the far side of the room thus proceeding with the sealing of the institute.

The treasure hunting group that was tasked with seeking out valuables in this floor had presented their finds before the Darkness God Corps. Amongst the treasures were the four broken magic flutes, some medical research materials, and a list of black market traders that the institute was dealing with.

“Who are these black market traders?”

“Usually they are dealing with illegal goods that you can’t sell in a normal store.”

“Some of them are also dealing with stolen goods.”

“There are rumors that these traders are connected to the bandit groups.”

It was apparent that the black market traders that were able to deal with an institute like this should have belonged to an influential black market organization. From the evidence that was left by the dead scientists, several bandit groups had also joined into one larger group that was dealing with the institute alongside the big black market organization.

“The problem is, with the fall of the institute, where would such a group hide themselves?”

Most probably they would remain in Trent Rieta’s territory and go to Driadria, pretending to be looking for work, or they would go to some part of the Sea of Trees and create a hidden village inside the forest.

Communication type wind arts were indispensable inside the Sea of Trees. If wind arts users were to filter the wind arts, flowing through the forest, they might be able to detect some suspicious communication amongst them. Regarding the black market traders, it was decided to leave them to the Trent Rietta’s regular army.

[“Speaking about Trent Rietta’s army—“]

Yuusuke suddenly remembered the trade restrictions that Trent Rietta imposed in order

to dampen Gazzetta's strength by placing checkpoints on the road and decided to drop the topic. Stealing a glance at Shinha, Yuusuke noticed that Shinha was also eyeing him while talking about something with Ayuukas.

Knowing his position within Fonclanc's military, it was obvious that he shouldn't disclose this information to Shinha.

"Still, Gazzetta, eh…?"

"Hm? Did you say something, Yuusuke?"

"Nah, it wasn't really important."

Shinha raised an eyebrow and tilted his head. "How does the country like Gazzetta work, when the King himself is wandering around other countries with just a sword in his hands?" Yuusuke continued wondering about it, finally arriving at the conclusion that the country should have a splendid management to be able to function like that.

["For the current Gazzetta that is."]

With the shortage of the materials, needed for purification of the healing potions, it was unavoidable that the costs for medicine would rise in the market. Not to mention that, there was the issue of rare herbs that were needed for the development of Razassha's medicine.

"I guess I shouldn't worry about that until after this mission."

From the pile of gathered valuables Darkness God Corps took only the evil beast and medicine research data and the list of black market traders and their clients, leaving the rest of the treasure – the instruments and research equipment – for the treasure hunters to share amongst themselves.

Amazed at the corps lack of desire for the valuable equipment, mercenaries and treasure hunters immediately started arguing about how to share the loot. Only the group that had tried to harass Sun before were punished, taking away their say at dividing the loot and being given he leftovers.

"I'm sure that some of them had secretly stole a few magic flutes."

"I think so too."

Yuusuke nodded, agreeing to the possibility that Vermeer had whispered him when both of the guys were looking at the lot that was fighting for the items, looted from the facility. It would be easy to ascertain it by searching the treasure hunters, but there was not enough evidence to order it.

***

"Prepare to leave the institute!"

When the loot was split, the investigation group began their preparations for departure. Yuusuke confirmed that everyone had left the institute and turned the last passage to a wall through his customization arts. At the afternoon of the fourth day since its formation, the investigation group had finished their mission to completely seal the

institute.

Members of the group started heading towards the underground passage and Gazzetta soldiers started preparing for their journey through a small passage that opened to the side of the institute.

“Are you going back as well, Shinha?”

“Yeah, we have achieved our objective.” Shinha answered, holding his great sword on his shoulder.

“In that case, this is good bye for now.”

“Ah, we’ll meet again.”

Artless soldiers and the two divine arts users that had accompanied them nodded, saying their goodbyes, to Yuusuke and left towards the small passage that continued on until the forest. The village shaman was following them when she suddenly turned around and shouted the invitation with a smile that she trained for three thousand years to achieve.

“How about it? If you have a chance, would you visit me in Gazzetta? We would definitely have a great time together.”

“I’ll have to refuse that…”

Politely refusing Ayuukas’ invitation, Yuusuke watched Shinha leave.

“Yuusuke-san, we’re ready to depart.”

“Mhm, then let us go home as well.”

[“Yes, ”] nodded Sun. Yuusuke joined her and the two walked over to the corps, waiting for them near the entrance of the passage.

***

“How was it?”

“I could synchronize with it, but the structure is completely foreign for me.”

Shinha’s party was walking through the animal trail inside the Sea of Trees. He was talking about the information that the shaman managed to grasp about Yuusuke’s ability, using her own power to synchronize with the powers of the Evil Gods, with Ayuukas, who was riding on his right arm.

For Ayuukas, this divine art did not belong to any type that she knew. The only limit that she had noticed during this trip was that it was unable to affect the user himself.

Although she had held Evil God’s power of eternal youth, she herself was not an Evil God. She had received this power from another Evil God, who was ancient, even by Ayuukas standards, when she had become ill with a disease that was ravaging the world three thousand years ago.

Therefore she was a demigod. With her body carrying some traits of an Evil God, she

could feel the powers of other (Evil) Gods.

It's a very interesting power that, when mastered, has no weaknesses (Limits, restrictions?)."

"…hmm."

***

~~Fyolnar's month of water, 2nd day ~~

News of the safe return of the investigation group, led by the Darkness God Corps, had reached Volance Palace. The investigation group was disbanded and the corps were preparing to return home.

"So, this means that Yuusuke is returning the day after tomorrow?"

Violet rejoiced after hearing these news, and was humming a tune as she was checking the package for the Darkness God Corps that she had received today.

She was still perplexed with the problem of how to raise the status of the Darkness God Corps members. The other day Krielov had shot down her proposal to promote the current members to the palace knights.

Originally the corps were formed as a façade for the Gearhawk fortress construction mission. The current members were only appointed until suitable members for the corps were selected. Since they were only temporary members of the corps, their status had remained just the "knights of the Darkness God Corps".

Violet had consulted her father, King Esvobus about this, however her wish this time was impossible to fulfil. In the end she compromised to recognize them as official members of the corps.

If even Sun was appointed as an official member of the corps, there was no hurdle to do the same with others as soon as they returned from their mission. The package that had arrived today contained their official uniforms. The uniforms were of a matching black color and were of slightly rougher design compared to Yuusuke's uniform.

"With this, the corps will now be official."

Knights had lower social status than the palace knights. However knights had a certain degree of freedom, including a right to draft divine art users to service.

"…but why do it like this?"

"Hm? There's no real reason. Being prepared is not a bad thing."

Violet was as confident as ever, yet there was an unusual glimmer in her sparkling eyes.

Suddenly Krielov shuddered, thinking of a possibility of a clash between the Princess and the King regarding the future of the country and threw this thought out of his mind as fast as he could.

Fonclanc's history was full of rebellions, incited by royal successors who had managed to gain significant military support within the capital. However each of these rebellions had happened because of the unresolved conflicts between the both sides.

There were no such shadows looming over Esvobus and Violet.

["I am overthinking this… It's because of what I heard that day."]

Krielov had accidentally overheard Reifold's tale from the other day about the history of Kaltcio, the purpose of the Evil God, and the Evil God being a pawn in the hands of the supreme (?) God. Currently this Evil God was under Esvobus influence, working for his daughter.

Right after that, Violet had talked to him about strengthening the corps, which made many of the missing pieces fall into their places.

"Hurry up and return. This time~"

"Princess, you should not treat the uniform like that. You will wrinkle it."

Krielov disciplined Violet, who had spread the mantle and was playing around with it.

***

Three days later Yuusuke's party had returned from their mission.

Chapter 76: The Wind Clan

Violet was briefing the Darkness God Corps members, clad in their new uniforms, about their current daily duties.

"How do I say this, aren't we looking a bit shady?"

Upon returning from their mission, Yuusuke was informed that the knights under him were promoted to official members. Because he was not a knight, Sorzak was only given a mantle, signifying his position in the corps. Wearing their new uniforms together, everyone looked like a mass of darkness, giving off a slightly eerie feeling, making Sun needlessly stand out with her white attendant clothes.

"I have to say that the uniform really fits you, Isotta."

"Hmm, I think it is slightly too big. Well, it will be fine once Yuusuke adjusts it later."

The uniform was covering half of Isotta's face. The girl seemed to be happy, as along with the status change their wages had risen as well.

"This means that we will be marching along the great Palace Corps during the Birth Festival."

"Aaah~, that's true, the clothes you were wearing before would've been embarrassing to wear during it."

The military parade was one of the festivities of the Birth Festival, an event that was held on the first day of the Fire Calendar, which was also the start of the new year.

This was a rare chance for the ordinary people to witness the famous palace corps. The palace knights would be walking in a line, wearing splendid, beautiful uniforms. It would be painful enough to imagine the Darkness God Corps marching in the festival, wearing their shabby mismatched clothes. Yuusuke would even have to consider requesting that he be the only person from the corps to be participating in the parade.

"From now on, all of you have the right to order the Knights. However Yuusuke will still be held liable for your actions. I hope you all understand that."

Vermeer, Shaheed, and Aisha were experienced with commanding and supporting duties so their responsibilities in the chain of command had barely changed. Fonke and Isotta had belonged to the wind users – the lowest arts users caste, meaning that they had little to no experience in commanding others and their new responsibilities were slightly different from what they were used to.

"Well, this seems to be fun, I think I'll manage somehow."

"M-me? Commanding others… W-what should I do?"

"It'll be alright, Isotta, I'll teach you."

Afterwards Krielov briefed everyone on the scope of their authority, and the first meeting of the newly remade Darkness God Corps had ended. For the time being, members gave their uniforms to Yuusuke so that the captain could customize them,

endowing the uniforms with strengthening and protective buffs.

“Then, I think this is enough for today. Ah, I forgot! Isotta, could you come with me to my room so that I could adjust your clothes?”

“Eh? Ah, yes!”

“Can you help me carry everyone’s uniforms?”

Yuusuke had to carry the uniforms of five people, totalling up to 15 pieces of clothing to his room, so he also asked Sun to help him. Isotta, slightly nervous after being called to Yuusuke’s private room in the palace for the first time, followed lagging slightly behind them.

“You shouldn’t play pranks on your subordinates.”

“I’d be strangled by Sun if I did it…”

Answering to Violet’s teasing, Yuusuke left the room. With this, the Darkness God Corps duties were done for today.

***

Just like that, a few days later the Darkness God Corps became widely known as a newly reestablished group which found itself in between the palace knights corps and the knights. On this day, the corps’ new status was finalized and they could resume their duties. Yuusuke visited Violet’s private room to brief her in, amongst other things, about the current status of the solar moss research.

“Oh, is that so. This means that the expedition to Trent Rietta was not a failure in the end.”

“The properties of the soil and water are the key. It seems that the tree that it grows on also has some effect over the moss.”

“So, how long do you think it would take to replace all the lamps in the city with riinlamps?”

“If I would have to say it, I think in the worst case it should take us around six more months.”

Hearing this, Violet heaved a slightly disappointed sigh. The riinlamp in her room was also using moss that was grown in Yuusuke’s mansion’s basement. This laboratory was sufficient to produce small quantities of the moss, but it was nowhere near capable of producing the amount that was required for these laps to become common place amongst the populace.

“Once we perfect the cultivation process, I think we can use the undercity to grow the sun moss.”

“Hmm, I see. Krielov, are there any obstacles to using the ruins?”

“I think that’s a good idea. It has been used as a hiding place for fugitives for a long time so there’s more than enough space in there.”

After Krielov confirmed that this plan was possible, the cultivation planning for the solar moss were temporarily abandoned after deciding to secure the necessary location as soon as possible.

Rashanasha's connections were used to gain cooperation from various scientists, capable of processing the medicinal research data from the evil beasts' research institute, however it would still be a while before any results would be obtained. Since the solar moss cultivation was proceeding according to schedule, it was decided to shift Razshia towards the new medicinal research.

"By the way, Sorzak's gearbox model seems to be complete so I think we can begin development of the functional small scale autonomous vehicles."

"So you plan on equipping your corps with it? Does that mean that mine is still not finished?"

"I mean to finish yours along the way."

Since the first concept of an autonomous vehicle, Yuusuke had been reviewing the fundamental system. He employed an approach to create a well-designed base instead of the haphazard approach that he had been using before.

Firstly he separated the engine from the passenger compartment and made the latter modifiable while preserving the power of the vehicle. This allowed the building of carriages with a simple, composed interiors as well as ones with flashy, luxuriously decorated interiors.

"Since the base is now complete, I will focus on creating various useful accessories for the carriage."

"Uhm! That sounds really exciting. I can't wait to see them!"

These new carriages had to be able to reach fairly high speeds if they were to be useful as the equipment for the corps. Violet already enjoyed riding the trial model around the indoor training halls, and shivered, thinking about such a carriage, capable of running around the city.

Contrary to Violet's huge smile, Krielov showed no enthusiasm about this invention – he already had a very hard time chasing Violet around the training halls.

"Don't worry, I'll install emergency switches in easily reachable places."

"If only that would be sufficient for me to catch the Princess…"

The Princess' personal guard and tutor stared at Yuusuke, his eyes begging for salvation. In the meantime the person in question was whistling while enjoying the exchange and dreaming about the day after tomorrow.

***

The knights resting room took the seventh and eighth floors of the palace. The lower floor was mostly used by the knights while the upper floor was reserved for their captains and also doubled as a place to hold meetings. A green haired man left this room, followed by an entourage of fire arts users.

"You know that digging around is my kind of preference."

"Thank you for warning us, however don't forget to watch yourself."

Reifold was showing his usual smile while talking to Hivodir, leading the fiancé candidate group, one of the most powerful cliques of the palace corps.

Part of Hivodir's intention in interacting with them was to make sure that none of them had any intentions of approaching the newly promoted captain. While it could not be said about every Evil God that had appeared in Kaltcio, at the very least, the current one held the key to grasping the entire world within one's hands. Therefore, it was necessary to pluck any potential sprouts who threatened the strength that could allow Fonclanc to obtain the entire world.

There was no proof, but it seemed that even the leaders of Nossentes, a country that boasted about its five – six thousand years history, failed to prepare their last generation of rulers regarding how to deal with the Evil God.

Reifold believed that it was the fault of these leaders and their mistreatment of the Evil God that had led to their demise.

["Well then, the lower class district is up next."]

After separating with Hivodir and leaving the palace, Reifold threaded through the upper class district's alleys as he proceeded towards the slums in the lowest district. His next mission was to obtain information regarding the black market traders. When he had accompanied Yuusuke's corps on their mission to Trent Rietta, he had investigated the trader's movements on a different passage, leading towards the institute.

Worried whether Yuusuke had been involved in the institute incident by the Trent Rietta, he had emerged at the slums, and started seeking out information dealers within its streets.

— That reminds me, that trader was also speaking with a Trent Riettaian accent, just like you—

Former Supreme Commander Izapnar had told him that in Paula's dungeons. This time it reminded him of a certain Trent Rietta clan.

At first he believed that man to be worthless. However, contrary to the pacifist nature of most of the Trent Rietta's ruling families, one of them was openly ambitious – the Elfdras clan.

The majority of Trent's population consisted of peaceful folk. From time to time the Elfdras were elected to become kings, and tried to express their wish to gather the strength of the country and push Trent Rietta to become a major country in the world. However the people had the power to oppose the kings, and had a different opinion – that such a rule would eventually bring their country to its ruin. These kings eventually lost all of their support and eventually the clan had disappeared from the palace. However it did not mean that they had been defeated.

Upon visiting Rinvaal, Reifold could not find a trace of the black market traders as if these people had disappeared. The fact that even this person could not find any signs

of them, ringed a warning bell in Izapnar's mind.

["For even me to not find a trace of them?"] — That meant that they had taken a lot of measures to remain hidden.

However, during his investigation, Reifold had found a link between the black traders and the Elfdras clan. The Institute guard's helmets were destroyed, but the remains had shown that they belonged to the Elfdras affiliated clan. This clan's main purpose was to be their ruling clan's guards.

It was not particularly strange that the members of the clan were absorbed by the mercenary groups after their head had disappeared, but it was definitely unusual for an entire clan to vanish like this.

It was also really strange for a clan that was this close to the Elfdras to be guarding the institute. This information was enough to deduce that the facility's scale was big enough for it to be controlled by several prominent groups.

["The Elfdras clan is pulling the strings behind the black market traders. Their real purpose is to overthrow Trent Rietta's government… no, aren't they aiming to rule the entire world?"

Reifold believed that his guesses were not far away from the truth.

It wouldn't be strange if the entire clan disappeared one day to bide their time gathering strength to overthrow the throne and turn their country into an empire.

The Elfdras was fully aware that the Evil God was the key to taking the control of the entire world, and sent the black market traders to other countries to gather information about the Evil God.

Blue Garden and Nossentes had opposed Fonclanc, which was sheltering the Evil God, and had destroyed themselves… Gazzetta is currently too strong for them, which means that Elfdras next target should be Trent Rietta.

In truth, Gazzetta's King, Shinha, had also been captured in front of Paula's main fortress, however he had one key difference from the former Supreme Commander Izapnar and the Divine Parliament – he didn't antagonize the Evil God.

Gazzetta seemed to know a lot about the Evil God and had even tried to lure him over to their side.

["After all, being friendly with Yuusuke allows one to benefit from the power of the Evil God."]

The Elfdras clan should have been thinking something along these lines, and although it was just one underground group, it was not an opponent to be trifled with. Because of this very reason, Reifold had to destroy the black market traders in Fonclanc, along with quelling the potential threats from inside of the country.

Chapter 77: The ambitions of the house of Elfodoras (Elfdras)

Hidden in the Sea of Trees of Trent Retta, there is a huge building that looks like a log house with overhanging vines. Located in the capital of Rinval, in a room of this great house, a woman who was the head of this house was exhaling a depressed sigh.

“Haiz….”

“My lady, why are you sighing?”

“You shouldn’t. To sigh, it will turn to misfortune you know?”

The attendants beside her were her childhood friends. Ever since she began to live in the capital, Welsh and Livona, these 2 people took care of her like usual.

The predecessor, Earl Elfodoras was hiding out in the region, aiming to control Trent Rietta, for 3 years he had created the underworld organisation called “Wind Edge”. In the beginning, as the boss of the dark merchants, he pioneered a commercial fleet escort, worked out new distributions, and was barely scraping along.

That was until a certain Nossentes research group, which wanted to raise money to continue their research on modded magical beast, commissioned them. Since then the activities of the dark merchants began to look more like those of a gang of bandits. Thus the current head was not happy about it.

Valerie had been thinking about it recently. Her father who went insane in his late years.

“~~the meaning of life is the struggles of the people! A world without struggle is a dead world! ~~”

A fool struggling to reclaim back the light of a fallen Trent Rietta, he tried to conduct a speech to the clan just a few days before Earl Elfodoras died, as it got closer to the raising of action he fell ill.

With the loss of their leader, the Wind Edge was at risk of being disband, up until now the Elfodoras family, which was supported by the Big Three, were waiting for Lady Valerie to become the successor, and to put the whole family in order.

Thereafter, the heads of the Big Three will respectively take the position of the internal affairs officer, financial officer and military officer and take charge of the organisation.

Thus from the side, the daughter of Earl Elfodoras will only be the successor in name and she will have almost no say as all the powers lies in the Big Three that are commissioned at the helm of the organisation.

Many of the people had been suffering from the current thief-like way that the organisation was being run; they had tried to appealed to Valerie for a reform, but with Fortress as the manager, he always changed the way he was dealing with her while giving a response like an unreasonable child.

“Ha….what am I doing here?”

“Erm, isn’t it because while the lady wasn’t around~ the organisation was falling apart?”

“Aren’t the 3 officers doing fine even without me around?”

“To move people, sometimes a symbol is necessary.”

Livona nonchalantly appeared from somewhere unknown, with an outward appearance, a relaxed voice without twisting her words and replying a “normal answer”, in contrast to her, Welsh had a cranky and serious atmosphere without trying to conceal anything and replying in his own way.

Valerie herself was self-aware, that now whatever answers she gave will not cause any harm.

“That said, what do you need me for~~”

“Ojou-SAMA~~!”

Valerie began resting her chins on top of her hands as she grumbled like usual, suddenly an artless youth rushes into the room as he forcefully swung opened the door. The young man with a black bracelet, kicked the nearby chair and ran up right in front of Valerie whose elbow was on the table.

“Odo, didn’t I always warn you about entering the room quietly?”

“Ahhh sorry! However, I have to inform ojou-sama about something quickly!”

Welsh looked at Odo in disappointment as he puts away the chair, while Valerie was smiling happily with Odo’s apology.

“A messenger of God?”

“!”

From the details of the story that Odo had brought back, Fonclanc had gotten their hands on the Messenger of God who could lead the world as the supreme leader.

Yet again he seem to pick up some shady rumors and brought it to Valerie, Odo seems to had gotten this from one of his dark merchant client who was an influential noble of Fonclanc, he explained that in order to attract the client he had not given any rare items or treasure trove information.

“I heard this from the guy working as a treasurer in financial office managing the commercial fleet, so there shouldn’t be any error!”

“Is Odo really not teasing me?”

“Treasurer…. Airzah-dono views information with great importance, I will not forgive you for spreading lies and rumors in the organization.”

“There are grounds for this right?”

When it comes to Fonclanc, nowadays it is often thought that the Darkness God Corps is famed to be the strongest unit. Just recently they had came to Trent Rietta to participate in the magical beast investigation.

“Whether it really is the god’s messenger or not be that as it may, recently Fonclanc’s appearance seems to be interesting.”

“So are you going? To Fonclanc?”

“I will, once the military officer is back.”

“Haiz we have a shortage of manpower especially on the escorts and you want to bring a bunch. The attendants you have should be enough.”

It’s not like he would do anything. Rather than been stuffed in the house listening to idle complaints, Valerie decided to go out and visit Fonclanc. Her aim to see whether the messenger of god that Odo had told her about existed.

“Then there is no choice let’s immediately depart!”

“I’ll prepare immediately!”

“You will be house-sitting.”

“Ehhhh~~!”

Knowing that they couldn’t change their mistress heart, they immediately began preparations for the trip. Being appointed as caretaker as they left the room, Odo was pleading, “Please take me along.”

“NO, right now is a bad time. There is probably strong criticism against the Artless.”

“Is it concerning Gazzetta?”

“There is that too, originally Fonclanc was strict about their social position.”

Since childhood, Valerie was familiar with the people around her, even her wariness is thin against normal divine art users and even an Artless like Odo. Valerie was brought up within this sheltered community, thus she had never lent a hand to a slave like Odo or even went out to see the world.

After Gazzetta overthrew the country, Nossentes’s former inhabitants fled to the neighboring countries and the hostilities and resentments from the past still ran fairly deep. There is a risk in meddling with the slave partner of an outsider when it comes to the slave bracelets. So normally anyone would want to act as inconspicuous as possible.

“Furthermore, if you were to come along the food supplies will finish faster.”

“Ah, I am aware of that too.”

Odo scratched his head and bashfully retorted against Valerie. When she was young her father had brought Odo to her and he had specifically make a clear distinction that he

was a slave, but Valerie made him a friend and kinda like a familial existence.

“Well then, I will head over to internal affairs for awhile, I entrust the preparation of the luggages to you.”

“Yes.”

Leaving the preparations for the trip to Odo, Valerie headed for the Fortress’s internal affairs offices to report on her trip to Fonclanc.

On the evening of the day Valerie was departing, the financial officer Airzah came to visit the office of internal affairs in regards to today’s meeting, after affirming that the military officer wasn’t around they began the talks.

“Finally it will begin whether to call it god or not, is that thing ready to be released?”

“My goodness, this shouldn’t be heard by the military officer.”

The three officers were supposed to have a meeting debating the policy of the present and the future of the organisation, but since the military officer Benefost was currently tied down with the replacing of the soldiers lost while investigating the magical beast facility, the two of them continued on without him.

With a strong sense of duty and his loyalty towards the previous head Earl Elfodoras, he seems to differ from the current head Valerie’s ideas and respect, Fortress was maintaining the organisation which was the Earl’s realisation, Airzah believed that money would allow one to control the world, thus they are thinking to first expand the organisation.

“Most of the members of the organisation are aligned with us. What about the gathering of the magical beast unit, I believe it’s a suitable time?”

About hiring the mercenaries that had gathered in Driadria, Airzuha began explaining that an essential amount of force is required to take Rinval while Fortress smiled wryly and replied, “shouldn’t that be the military officer’s job?”

“There were no other choices, we can’t really rely on that no foresight, trying to be a heroic military officer that keeps harping on loyalty, do you think I need unnecessary trouble?”

The current state was just right, as more than half of Trent Rietta’s army was stationed along the upper and lower parts of the highway, due to that the capital Rinval was currently undermanned. Thus, Airzah emphasized that now is a good chance to attack while Fortress on the other hand began envisioning about the strategies.

Fonclanc, Blue Garden, Gazzetta, Trent Rietta, the results of the simulation of each of their present and future movement ended with an image of profound success. Lady Valerie’s trip to Fonclanc this time will contribute to the factor of success.

“Well then, Valerie ojou-sama’s first step as the leader of the “Wind Edge” will be a distraction flower.”

"Ohh! Finally, we are standing on the same page."

GA officer Fortress stood up as the Financial officer Airzah expressed a voice of delight. As the heiress of the Wind edge founded by Earl Elfodoras, they were taken by surprise as they believe that Valerie rise to action was to go to Fonclanc.

After the loss of their leader, the three officers had continued the activities of the organisation and since it was the earnest desire of the late Earl and his daughter to save the capital Rinval from dying, thus Fortress began to think through the different planned scenarios.

"I see, if we set the plan in motion like that then she and Benefost will also be of use to us? That is quite a strategy."

"A conclusion that I have thought about before. Now the problem is under what conditions and timing we should use them?"

Financial and war potential, the absolute superiority of the magical beast to be put into practical use. The intervention of a great country, Fonclanc and the checking of the existences of Gazzetta. There is a need to assess the requirements of the current situation, if they were to acquire everything.

"About the absence of Valerie ojou-sama, who's gonna~~explain it to the military officer!"

"!"

Sfx*gatan the sound of footsteps from the hallway moved past the office. Causing the door to creak slightly open. As they tried to use wind arts to sense the presence of divine arts, but after confirming Fortress believed that the shadow that had fled was an artless. In this place, the only artless was Odo who is Valerie's slave.

"Ojou-sama's slave must have heard the conversation just now."

"I'll get my man to track him!"

"Well then, please get to it quickly. I will prepare the assassins for an emergency."

Airzah immediately called upon his escorts and gave the order to kill the runaway artless on sight. There were those who knew about Odo as they began showing signs of hesitation as it would cause discord with lady Valerie."

'That artless slave has a habit to interfere with Ojou-sama', they came up with this as an excuse.

"Life is a struggle. My master, your daughter had brilliantly began to sow the seeds of strife. Everything is set into motion….."

Deep down, Fortress gave praise to the Earl, although his expression seems calm, the simple plans began moving.

Fyolnar ~ 10th day of the Water month ~

On that day, the palace knights were having outdoor training, they were having an performance test on the Darkness God Corp's equipment which was the small type vehicles.

They had created a motorcycle chassis through the various experiment to house a more powerful motor unit which could carry two people. The seat was a saddle lined up from the front to the back.

They had also installed a suspension system, but due to the cheap material, the ride still wasn't as good on rough roads.

"oohhh~toto! Turn around ~~"

"Ohhh this is great! It feels pretty good~!"

Throttling away on the training fields, Yuusuke and Fonke were both on the bike which did a power slide when he turned on the set course.

The performance test was a great success as it ran close to the speed and as stable as Violet's prototype powered car. The speed was around 25 km/hr.

Though it still isn't enough to replace carriages, it would still be useful when navigating in places like the underground passageway of the magical beast facility.

"Faster faster let me ride on it too~~!"

"Wait a moment, we are going to custom make Violet's one."

"EH~, after showing me such a nice toy, I won't be able to wait."

"Uwa er Princess, wait, ouch ouch ouch"

After Yuusuke returned from going two rounds around the training course, Violet came jumping towards the small type vehicle. Seeing Fonke's amusing face after being kicked off the bike, Aisha and the rest began to laugh.

"Well then let's go! I want to try what you did just now."

"Alright since there is no choice."

Violet who was behind Yuusuke began grabbing his waist tightly while singing "run~run". Yuusuke wore a wry smile as he drove the bike carefully. During the experiment with Fonke, wind art movement assist could be seen in use.

Without the wind art assist it became a touch unstable, thus prioritizing Violet's safety first he drove with caution as he continued with the moving experiments since the tomboyish princess didn't seem to want to stop as it was still quite some time before Krielov would come to pick her up.

"ooo(exclaim), finally it became a little quiet."

"Fufu, Princess Violet seems to be satisfied."

“Thanks for your work, Captain.”

After the training was over, thinking that she might still want to ride it, he began to create Violet’s personal vehicle, using his customization menu Yuusuke summoned the 90% completed vehicle. The materials used were mainly made out of wood.

The small type vehicle, other than the motor unit which was made out a metal fittings, the rest of the parts are made out and designed from wood type materials, and even the body frame was customize to be strong.

“O.o? Where’s Fonke?”

“It seems like he is riding on that?”

“Captain~! I like this one better.”

Fonke seems to be able to handle the bike well on his first ride alone as he slant the chassis while cornering. Although compared to the four wheel drive the speed seems a little slower, but it can be adjusted with wind arts movement assist. Since it is easy to balance, it benefits from the blessing of movement assist.

“Hmm, since it’s compatible with tight corners. Should I let Fonke use this bike?”

In the past few days, within Volance palace, there was just a little commotion in these peaceful days. One could even take a quiet and relaxing afternoon nap, although it seemed like the calm before a storm.

~~ Three days later, an urgent message came from Trent Rietta as the peaceful days were broken.

Chapter 78: Trent Rietta's civil war

A messenger arrived from an organization known as “Wind Edge”, to the old divine chapel located in Gazetta’s Patrucia Nost.

They aim to revolt against and overthrow the current government that was ruling Trent Rietta. Knowing details about the current anti-Gazzetta strategy between Fonclanc and Trent Rietta, they exposed the trade restriction plan of weakening Gazzetta.

“What’s the objective of your group?”

“We would like to seek support...”

“Oh, but…. for us to mobilize would have to depend on the information passed to us, just hope that it would be good enough for consideration.”

“Is the anti-government organisation of Trent Rietta inviting us to join their intervention?”

It is clear that “Wind Edge” is trying to use Gazzetta, and it’s also true that the circulation of goods have stagnated due to the trade restriction.

“So what do the people here have to say on it?”

“So, do we go along with their plans?”

“Ah, but…”

But it might not go as they wanted to as Shinha had many spies hiding across the countries and he would be able to move the cavalry into Trent Rietta borders with just one order.

“First will be intel, do not miss even the slightest rumor. Go through all of Fonclanc and Trent Rietta’s information.”

Gazzetta’s territory spanned from down of the south coast highway, which was the southwestern part of Trent Rietta, to the highway north of the mirror moon lake.

Currently, both of these roads have a trade restriction blockade due to the containment strategy that came from Fonclanc and Trent Rietta, and in order to support this, regular soldiers are dispatched from it’s capital Rinval.

Fyolnar ~ 12th day of the water month, midnight ~~

“Enemy Attack~~!”

An angry voice resounded from the watchtower. Those that were asleep after their shift had jumped up awake, and even those that were in the dining hall while eating were beginning to rush out.

On the North highway near Gazzetta’s border, the Trent Rietta forces that were stationed there for the blockade were constantly worrying about whether Gazzetta

would attack them.

“The scale of the enemy is...!”

“What happened to the communication with the sentries?”

“Checking for transmission interference~~No, there isn’t any….this is...”

“Hey, this kind of wave presence is...”

The flame arts which lights the surroundings began to disappear, and the weapons that were strengthened by divine arts that were to be used against the enemies became unstable as the strange wave presence enveloped the area. From the depths of the forest, multiple footsteps could be heard approaching. Not only were there human’s footsteps, there were also footsteps of beasts mixed in.

“It’s a Magical Beast raid~~!”

“There are mercenaries mixed in it, what in the world is going on!”

“I can’t use my divine arts, those things are modded magical beasts!”

“Send a message to the capital for reinforcements….”

The magical beasts of the wind edge forces began their attack on the confused stationed troops while they were being afflicted by the divine arts obstruction wave. The interception troops were centered around the offensive divine arts, and due to that being powerless against this kind of situation they were quickly swept off by the mercenaries.

“Raise your weapons! Those who can’t fight in close combat evacuate into the buildings!”

“A new group is approaching from the highway! There are tons of magical beasts!”

Those who were wielding the divine arts enhanced weapons began their counter offensive resistances, and some of them began fighting the mercenaries while others tried to attack the magical beasts with the least resistances.

The midnight raid of the outpost located on the North highway was a success, as the troops that were stationed there were annihilated overnight.

Fyolnar ~ 13th day of the water month~~

“The port city, it sure is lively.”

“It seems that bringing Odo was a good decision~”

It’s been 4 days since Valerie and her group had left the deep forest and had arrived at the Port city of Fonclanc. On the streets, the locals were conversing normally with Artless people, there wasn’t any shunting of the Artless as they thought.

“Ng, the capital might be different from this place….”

"I wonder, from the previous inn I heard that recently Sanc Adiet have been employing artless to work on the streets."

Valerie dodged the oncoming patting on the head from Livona as Welsh came back after finding an accommodation for them.

"Is the cheap inn warm?"

"....it's in a clean and good location. Ojou-sama, Livona let's head to the inn with haste."

"...? Did something happen?"

"I'll explain the details later. First, we have to move quickly."

Valerie and Livona looked at each other while an unbearable atmosphere was surrounding Welsh as they began following him into the alley from the main street.

The view of the mirror moon lake could be seen from the window of the 2nd floor room, Welsh was getting information from the merchant official of the trade association in the port city.

Early this morning, Trent Rietta's army which was stationed at the north highway were attacked by armed combatants and were decimated. The organisation named "Wind Edge" had declared war against Trent Rietta's government under the head of the Elfodoras house/clan?.

"What the! What's Airzah doing for his own convenience….."

"Shhh~~ please quiet down."

"Is that information true? Is it confirmed?"

"I'll go check on the authenticity of the information. You two please stay here and wait, try not to go out."

With the conflicting information, Welsh was currently liaising in the room next door with one of the dark merchants.

In Officer fortress's office, located in the hq of wind edge, he was analyzing all the available information in order to make his next action. As reports of soldiers gathering on the road within the west borders of Gazetta had arrived.

"Gazzetta's army is heading for the lower outpost on the highway, the upper lookout is abandoned, let's advance into the next phase."

"Hmmm. Next is the capturing of Driadria, you have to capture it before the reinforcement from Rinval arrives….. Military officer."

"Two battalions...I'll show you that I can capture it in half a day."

“Now then, after the Military officer’s troops capture Driadria, one corps will be reserved for the lower outpost, the rest will head towards the capital.”

The news of Gazzetta’s army who had successfully locked the lower outpost troops had reached the ears of the Wind Edge’s army, and after the troops had pulled out of the upper outpost, Military officer Benefost began his attack on Driadria with two battalions.

Originally, the Trent Rietta troops that were garrisoned in Driadria were little, the defence strategy determined by it’s commander was to abandon Dria and head to the mines of Rudia to wait for reinforcement from the capital Rinval.

However, the mercenary forces concealed themselves near Rudia mines in advance, and they began their attack and occupation of the mines at the same time as the Wind edge army attack. With their retreat to the mines cut off, the garrison was destroyed by the pincer attack of Benefost forces.

The declaration of capturing Driadria in half a day have gone by as Military officer Benefost headed to deploy troops on the highway to welcome the reinforcement from Rinval in order to divert the attention of the Trent Rietta’s army to them, while the main army marched towards the capital under the command of Financial officer Airzah.

In the royal palace of Rinval, the bureacrats one after the other had brought in bad news as King Cliffzard was scratched his head in troubled.

“Driadria had fallen! Currently a battalion size enemy force is deployed on the highway.”

“....it couldn’t even be held for a day, do you think that the reinforcement would be able to cope with it?”

“If the troops pass through the mines and the other troops advance on the highway we might be able to somehow manage it~~”

“I would like to report! The mountain mining road is impassable! Due to falling rocks the reinforcements have dropped by half.”

From that report the faces of the bureaucrats turned blue. The mountain route was an important transportation route connecting to Rinval which carries large amount of goods necessary for daily life.

The foolish move was smashed as the indignation of the bureaucrats could be seen while the King maintained his composure.

“Voicing out your grievance here won’t do anything. What’s the actual current forces of the enemies?”

“Unfortunately…..”

Currently, they need to confirm the status of the upper outpost troops and the occupied troops of Driadria and also the observation of lower highway troops.

“Haiz….. An organisation to have declared war against one country, how much of military power does it have?”

“My King, should we seek help from Fonclanc?”

“It might be better to recall the reinforcements that had been sent to Driadria.”

“Since the mountain road is sealed, there isn’t the need to worry of an attack from the back of the capital….could it be, the enemy’s forces aim was~~”

The bureaucrats began to panick and pick out people to blame as they became unorganised. Seeing that the King Cliffzard immediately ordered for the defence of the capital and the recapture of Driadria.

“Send a transmission to our allied country Fonclanc for help. Get the troops returning from Driadria to standby at the border. Prioritize the clearing of the mountain pass.”

“My King, wouldn’t it be better to leave the mountain pass blocked?”

Geographically if the attacks were to come from the highway towards Rinval, Fonclanc’s reinforcement would be caught on the flanks and from the rear.

That particular bureaucrat was considering to leave it blocked as the organisation called “Wind Edge” might send in troops through the mines, because the intention of “Wind Edge” might not be to attack Rinval, but the aim of making Driadria an independent state.

“It’s not an option to consider, I have a bad feeling about this. Their intent of camping on outside the borders of the highways to the capital feels like a trap.”

The bureaucrat had his head down as a response to the deep insights of King Cliffzard. But, in his heart he was apologizing to the family as he had failed to mislead the king. He was in fact from a branch of the Elfodoras Family.

“A person can’t be too cautious, proceed as planned. Whether Fonclanc’s intervention arrives first or the capital falls will be the key to this war.”

After Fonclanc received the distress message from Trent Rietta’s government, the selection for the reinforcement troops and commanders began in Volance Palace.

Reports of unusual movement from Gazzetta were reported by the dispatched scouts whom were first to arrive on the borders of Trent Rietta.

“There is a group of Gazzetta’s army gathering at the peninsula area of Trent Rietta?”

“Aren’t those guys suspicious at that location by crossing the Moon mirror lake?”

“This was reported by the neighbourhood watch organisation of the harbor city~~”

There is a tip that the head of Elfodoras, the founder of “Wind Edge” is currently hiding out in the port city.

“Hmm...is there a possibility of perturbation?”

“There is. However, I am more concerned about Gazzetta’s movement.”

The intel officer’s proposal to send troops to the port city was agreed by the palace’s bureaucrats. The prime candidate for these mission to dispatch reinforcements troops to Trent Rietta and an investigation group to the port city was of course the Darkness God Captain.

Not too long ago, he was the Princess’s follower without any achievements, many had opposed him to be a dispatch candidate, after the incident of the artless village raids and saving the Volce family, many of the other nobles acknowledged him, thus Yuusuke’s activities were seen as an honor to the country.

Even recently his contributions to the Magical beast facility blockade was spread throughout the different countries. After thinking for awhile, King Esvosbus began to announce the personnel that were selected for Trent Rietta’s reinforcement and the investigation group for the port city.

“So the mission this time is the investigation and defence of the harbor city. Depending on the situation, we might need to support Trent Rietta’s reinforcement.”

On the second floor of the palace, in the god corp’s resting room (enlistees mess) which they rarely got a chance to use, the Darkness God Corps member gathered for a mission briefing by Violet.

The Darkness God Corps was appointed the mission of investigating the port city, as for the reinforcement to Trent Rietta, those with excellent leadership from the different corps were dispatched with Hivodir as the commander of the troops.

“King Esvosbus seem to be pretty planned to the appointment this time.”

“Is that so?”

They had even sent out the vice-captains of the palace corps as commanding officers to the battlefield. Vermeer analyzed that in order to improve the overall standard of the palace knights that didn’t have much experience, he had chosen someone without regards to social status or divine power.

“Well, it’s that king, he should have a lot of confidence in his strategies.”

“Hmmm”

“This time it’s because of the failure of containment of Gazzetta, Dad seemed to want to aggravate the situation.”

King Esvosbus’ way to progressively increase his war potential had more or less left an uncomfortable feeling - up until now he had been using avoiding tactics by using the point of view from the Darkness God Corps and Violet’s group.

As they remembered, Krielov who was standing next to them had talked about the conversation that the king and Reifold had.

“To attain god’s pieces, competing for the supremacy of the world in the history of

Kaltcio~~is it...”

Looking towards Violet. As the Darkness God Corps member happily converse with the flame princess.

“Somehow” all the current members of the Darkness God Corps were officially recognised, except for Sun and Sorzak, thus they were given their own authority if they needed to move the normal soldiers.

Thus during the prior few days, the members of the Darkness God Corps members were to select “their own soldiers” to cultivate their leadership skills.

“So in that case, the mission this time….the investigation mission in the harbor city, most likely would comprise of the squads of the Darkness God Corps members.”

This mission is to solidify the union of the Darkness God Corps, as Violet states, finally the Darkness God Corps had attainned its own forces. Whether is this just coincidental visionary talent or the karma of the “Evil god”, who knows?

“That said, Krielov go ahead and explain the details.”

“.....okay, the details. The main objective of the mission in the harbor city is~~”

Remembering the silly bickering of Violet and King Esvobus caused Krielov to become a little uneasy as he began to explain the details of the mission. The Darkness God Corps investigation group and Hivodir’s reinforcement troops will depart from Fonclanc for their mission the next day morning.

Happening on Fyolnar ~ 16th day of the water month~

Chapter 79: Valerie of the Flame Whip

The mountain road, connecting Rinwaal and Trent Rietta, branched into two roads – one was a mountain trail, winding between the mountain crevices, the other was cut into the face of a steep cliff. Both of these roads connected to the road to the Rudea mines.

Presently, the Wind Edge army had set up a rock blockade on the mountain road, and a large portion of the road though the cliff face was damaged, making it completely impassable. Trent Rietta's army, dispatched to restore access to the mines, had abandoned the cliff road and were working on clearing the boulders that were blocking the mountain road.

"Still, for those guys to go this far…"

"Right, eh? I don't even want to think of how long it would take to restore this road."

"What happened?"

"Nothing, I just thought that I saw something move…"

A pair of road workers had skipped on the road restoration that continued throughout the night, and had come to look at the state of the cliff side road. They suddenly saw something moving in the darkness, where the destroyed road suddenly ended in an abyss. Suddenly, a long thing with a sharp tip flew towards them with a whistling sound.

"Whoa!"

"What the heck?!"

A rope was tied to the other end of the thing that was actually an iron pick. With a gust of wind, the pick had flew besides them, and had embedded itself into the cliff. It was soon followed by a strong divine arts aura that was caused by another gust of wind which had hammered into the blunt end of the pick.

To ensure that the rope was properly fixed in its place, two, no, three more picks flew their way, and with a metallic sound had hit the cliff, binding the rope to the wall.

"H-hey! Can this…"

"It can't be. It's impossible for someone build a suspension bridge in this place."

As the workers had feared, once the stakes had been set in place, small metallic fixtures attached to them had unfolded, making a small suspension bridge suitable for a single person to cross over the crevasse.

Immediately, the small suspension bridge started swaying, indicating that someone was crossing it from the other side. The two road workers tried their best to destroy the bridge, but for some reason they could not activate their earth arts.

"We can't do anything here! We must warn the main army about this!"

"Someone is controlling the wind — No, this is!"

The two workers, trying their best to cut the rope that was holding the bridge, looked towards the darkness and saw the glimmering fangs of the evil beasts that were coming over from the other side of the crevasse.

***

Late at night Rinwaal's palace was busy as if someone had disturbed a giant bee hive.

A small scale invasion from the thought-to-be severed road to the mines, centered around a pack of modified evil beasts, was launched on the worker team that was repairing the mountain road. All contact was lost with the workers team and the military force that was sent to aid them had to retreat back to the city gates when they were met with the divine arts obstructing aura.

Moreover, the troops at the country's border had reported that a large army, thought to be the main body of the invading troops, was approaching them. Afterwards, all contact with the border was lost.

There was no definite intel on the composition of the Wind Edge army, but since part of it was comprised of the evil beasts that emitted a divine arts obstruction aura, it was likely that the majority of the army should be comprised of mercenaries that favored close quarters combat.

Trent Rietta's army had no means to deal with this aura, and their position was grim.

"Fonclanc's reinforcements…"

"We have sent a support request to them, but it is impossible for help to arrive in just two days."

King Grifzah was watching the area, surrounding the city, for the signs of their enemies that he could inform Fonclanc of. That country had the Darkness God Corps that had managed to seal the institute. He had hoped that they would have some sort of countermeasures against the modified evil beasts.

"My King, if we give too much information to Fonclanc they will take advantage of that to gain leverage over us."

"I am fully aware of that, however right now we are in no place to haggle or negotiate with them."

Although they had only suffered a small surprise attack, the capital was already in danger. There was no time to be concerned with one's position.

***

Trent Rietta's military positions along the highway had been lost and the Wind Edge army was approaching the capital. The forces sent on the upper Driadria highway had taken the city and returned to rejoin with Benefost's main force.

"Oh my, to use such bold tactics. As expected from the head of the army."

"That's my job. More importantly, have your men found lady Valerie yet?"

"Ehm, we are still careful with our wind communications. However we have noticed Gazzetta's military movements so I believe that she had been found."

"… is that so. That's good."

For now adjutant general's Fyotress's explanation was sufficient to Benefost. Not heeding his advice, Valerie disagreed against mobilizing the army so quickly, but that was just another trait that ran strong in her bloodline.

Under the cover of darkness, the Wind Edge army marched on. Benefost narrowed his eyes, looking at the city of Rinwaal shining far ahead of him. Airzah grinned in his mind, watching the commander concentrate before the approaching battle.

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~Seventeenth day of the Water month of Fyolnar~

The investigation group led by the Darkness God Corps had been camping out just past the crossroad with the Blue Garden highway. They were in contact with Hivodir's support group that was marching towards the coastal road through Rufk village, and were also waiting for any kind of contact from Trent Rietta.

"Support group will soon reach the coastal road. Zeshald-san seemed to be in good health when they passed by the village."

"Good to know. That guy sure is something, to check on sensei under the current circumstances."

Yuusuke was tampering with a combat type map item while listening to Hivodir's periodic report from Isotta. Yuusuke desired more variety in his arsenal than the defensive walls and pitfalls that he currently had, so he was reworking his system from the ground up.

Yuusuke's investigation group consisted of five squads of eight people, each of the squads led by a Darkness God Corps member. Similarly to the Deernook fortress mission, Yuusuke himself had directly commanded a twenty troop squad. Thus the total size of the commanded soldiers group was sixty people.

Including the members of the corps and Sun, the entire force was sixty seven people, and as expected, Yuusuke was unable to create a lodging house that was large enough to accommodate everyone.

"Yuusuke-san, Fonke-san's group has returned."

"Mhm, I'm coming right away."

Fonke was using a bike to scout the road ahead. There was no real danger to be wary about, but considering the threat of the Wind Edge and Gazzetta army's movements on the opposite shore of the lake, it was not excessive to scout the road ahead for any traps or ambush so that the main force could move without danger.

While he had voiced such an argument, in truth Fonke enjoyed riding a high speed vehicle and had resorted to all sorts of excuses to use it. However he still properly performed the tasks that he had set out to do.

“I have driven until the end of the forest. I had passed a group of travelling merchants, but there seemed to be nothing out of the ordinary.”

“Thank you for the report.”

After giving the report, they had separated the power unit from the two wheeler and had put it away. Fonke seemed to be tired, yet satisfied. After the bike was put away, he motioned the person that was riding along with him to follow and walked off towards the resting carriage.

As a side note, all the knights under Fonke’s command were females.

“Captain, aside from eight knights, everyone is rested.”

“Good job. These eight people have just returned a little while ago, so please tend to them. We’re leaving soon.”

Smiling wryly, Aisha turned towards the indicated wagon along with her squad of healing and recovery type water arts users. The Darkness God Corps uniforms were customized, so their wearers did not get fatigued.

Controlling such a large group, Yuusuke had to care for the health of his subordinates. That had also increased their loyalty towards him, but that was not his main objective.

“Then, lets mov—“

“C-CAPTAIN!”

Isotta frantically interrupted her captain, who was giving the usual call to resume the march.

“What happened?”

“A-an emergency transmission… It seems that Trent Rietta’s Rinwaal… has fallen!”

Tension had instantly rose within the group. Vermeer was the first one to react and did the most appropriate thing – inquired for the details.

“Was that a Wind Edge’s proclamation? Is King Grifzah dead?”

“There is no more information. The corps and the investigation group should continue their march towards the harbor town. Give the order, Captain.”

“Uhm…”

“Don’t be too hasty.”

In the end, the group was to continue moving until the harbor town. The nine carriages moved in a row, heavy mood surrounding the knights riding inside. An active discussion regarding the latest development was being held in the carriage that the Darkness God Corps rode in.

“Were those guys really that strong or was Trent Rietta that weak?”

“What will become of General Hivodir?”

“If their capital has actually fallen, we shouldn’t approach Trent Rietta too carelessly.”

“It would be difficult to attack Rinwaal from our position.”

Although the circumstances were unclear, Vermeer was worried by the very fact that the city had fallen. He was considering a possibility that Gazzetta had made a treaty with Wind Edge and had been gathering the army of the other side of the lake in preparation of a war with Fonclanc.

It was possible that King Esvobus had sent Yuusuke towards the harbor town foreseeing this, and knowing that Shinha tended to avoid fighting against the Evil God.

“In case our worst fears come to pass, the Captain will solve everything with his powers, right?”

“Don’t put even more pressure on him…”

Yuusuke was too immersed in modifying his offensive map item data, and mumbled that it was alright as long as his opponent was Shinha. Soon after that, a message from Hivodir reached them, informing that his support group had stopped at the coastal road, prepared a camp, and were dispatching spies into the neighboring country’s territory to gather more consistent information about the recent news.

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~Eighteenth day of the Water month of Fyolnar~

Welsh had received the news of the rash actions of the radical cliques of his organization. Although the attack had been sudden, and that they had powerful modified evil beast handlers amongst them, they had still taken considerable losses.

There was no way of going back after a war declaration was issued under the name of the Elfdras clan head. His entire party had banded together to discuss measures that would help them avoid an all-out war against Trent Rietta’s government.

“Damn it! That was such a stupid idea…”

“Benefost’s actions have left us defenceless..”

“What’s more, the rumors about the Princess being here has spread. It might be because of this news that the Darkness God Corps are coming to this port town.”

“WHAT?! That strongest unit?!”

Welsh had restrained the flustered Livona, guessing that the Darkness God Corps were probably coming here because of Gazzetta’s movements on the opposite shore of the lake. Naturally, Fonclanc would probably respond to Trent Rietta’s plea, but if the Darkness God Corps heard rumors that the head of the Elfdras family was hiding in the harbor town, they would exert all their effort in capturing her.

“That’s why if we will not escape from the town quickly–!”

“Ok, ok, calm down… What’s your plan?”

“We will request the black market traders of this town to get us away from here.”

They would look suspicious if they tried to escape during the night, so it was decided that they would dress up as traveling merchants and escape during the day. After leaving the town they would get off the highroad once it was safe and travel to the lake. There they would board a small boat which would be prepared in advance and use it to reach Trent Rietta.

“We’re leaving immediately. I’ll wait at the rear exit on the first floor. Meet me there once you two are ready to leave.”

“Well then, let’s not waste a second here.”

“I couldn’t do any sightseeing after all…”

Despite Valerie complaining about how she had to shut herself in the inn once they arrived, and barely leaving afterwards, her servants had begun their preparations to escape from Fonclanc.

***

Keeping up the pace, the investigation group had arrived at the port town ahead of schedule and were currently at the inn street. The group was accompanied by the town guard, who helped them to unload their luggage and prepare for the stay.

“Captain, I have received an update on Trent Rietta.”

Isotta told everyone that the Wind Edge army was composed of Demon Beast handlers, controlling a force of the modified evil beasts, and a sizeable army of mercenaries as their main force. Their tactics relied mainly on successful surprise attacks. This meant that divine arts users were useless against Wind Edge.

“The modified evil beasts, eh…?”

“They are clearly related to the Evil Beast Research Institute. Should we look more deeply into it?”

“That’s the obvious way to think about it.”

A courier with an escort, carrying the magic flutes to be used when fighting against the modified evil beasts, was dispatched to the supporting group that had taken up a position on the coastal highroad. These were the flutes that Yuusuke had mass-produced based on the samples that he had recovered from the research institute.

The flutes were made of metal instead of wood and had a complex and fine structure to produce the required sound. Although Sorzak was quite skilled in the earth arts, the flute was simply too difficult for him to recreate.

In the end Yuusuke’s customization ability had to be used to analyze the peculiarities of the flute and copy it by breaking through the hurdles that had defeated Sorzak.

“Speaking of magic flutes, it would be good to have some on our side as well.”

“We’re off to secure the area.”

"Oka~y, thanks for doing it."

After finishing her report, Isotta and several of her subordinates had scattered in the nearby streets to ensure that there were no enemies nearby. Other soldiers soon followed suit, some of them going to search for information within the town, others – to try and gather what they could get find about the movements on the opposite shore from this side of the lake.

After greeting the leaders of the town guard, Yuusuke had ordered the soldiers under his direct control to take the positions around the inn. This was the last necessary task that Yuusuke had to do for now so he had invited Sun for a walk around the town.

"Is this the first time that you have come to the harbor town?"

"Yes. In fact, I have been eager to see the town!"

"Hahaha, do you want to do it alone then?"

"No… I wanted to do it together with you…," said Sun, slightly blushing.

Yuusuke scratched the back of his head in embarrassment.

"Y-you sure?"

"Yes!"

One of them had black hair and was wearing a black corps uniform, while the other had white hair and was wearing white servant clothes – their mismatched looks stood out as the two held their hands as they walked around the town.

Wandering around for a while, the two had found themselves at the end of a silent street. This street was close to the highway road. There they saw something resembling a pile of rags lying on the street. After taking a better look it became apparent that it was a human.

"…! Yuusuke-san!"

"Ah, it's horrible."

A young man was lying face down on the road, his bloody and dirty body covered with wounds and bruises. By the color of his hair, the man seemed to be an Artless. He was still alive, but seemed to be on his last breaths. Yuusuke shouted to Sun to call Aisha and the others while he tried to help the man with what medicine he had on him.

***

"Hey, that's the artless girl that we passed a little while ago!"

"She's the attendant for the Darkness God Corps."

"Damnit, didn't you say that they shouldn't have arrived here before afternoon?"

Valerie's group had disguised themselves as traveling merchants and were moving towards the meeting place that they had agreed on with the people that would get them out of Fonclanc. Because the Darkness God Corps had arrived earlier than they

expected, they were quickly trying to get off the street, being fearful of the soldiers that were passing by them from time to time.

Just when they had gotten away from the main street and went towards town exit, they had stumbled upon a black haired man, dressed in black, who was crouching in the middle of the road for no reason. Perhaps nervous from being so close to the town's exit, everyone spontaneously looked at the body that was lying at the man's feet.

Although the lying man was in a precarious state, and his swollen face was covered with bruises, Valerie recognized the man that she knew all too well. It was an Artless youth that shouldn't have been in this town.

"ODO!"

"You can't! Rifome, stop our lady!"

"Milady, restrain yourself!"

However the Valerie's divine arts were too strong for Rifome to hold the girl – she easily got away from her attendant and dashed towards the man.

***

Yuusuke was trying to apply some recovery medicine to help the Artless youth. Confirming that small bruises and swells were all that remained on his back, Yuusuke had turned the man over to heal his chest. At that time –

"ODO!"

"Hm?"

"Bastard! How dare you do this to Odo!"

A scream from behind his back had suddenly caught Yuusuke's attention. A woman with an arm surrounded by flames (with flames spiraling around her arm) was rushing at him. She was framed by impressive red hair that had a few radiant green colored bangs mixed in.

"Hey! What are you—"

The black clad man had no time to chat as the flames extended towards him as if they were alive. Yuusuke had immediately responded with an earth wall. The wall that had instantly rose from the ground made Valerie's attendants suddenly realize who the man in front of them was.

["The wall… Damn it, he is the rumored one!"]

The flame whip had hit the wall and jumped off of it as the spell attempted to get around the obstacle to reach its target. However, although if it was aimed accurately, it had hit the ground far away from its target, and extinguished leaving only a black trail after it.

Valerie's divine art mixed fire and wind divine arts. It controlled fire with wind, enabling her to lash with the fire as if it were a whip. Creating yet another flame whip around

her hand, Valerie rushed towards the other side of the wall.

"Hey, calm down! Why are you attacking me?"

"Don't bullshit me. Odo might have been a fool and he had some faults… but I will never forgive you for what you have done to him."

Dodging out of the way of the flame whip, Yuusuke thought to surround his opponent with wells and drop her into a pitfall, however the intense attacks did not allow him to concentrate enough to actually do it.

"Just calm down. You are misunderstanding the situation here."

"SHUT UP! He might be an artless, but he's the same human as us. That—"

Yuusuke realized that his opponent knew the collapsed youth and had let the blood rush to her head, losing her sense of reason. To create a gap between him and his opponent, Yuusuke called out a simple gimmick item to break his opponent's rhythm. The gimmick didn't need much resources to create so its construction was simple but its effectiveness was also low.

Yuusuke had tested the usefulness of the gimmick before, but this was the first time he was using it in actual combat. The Evil God had thrown it towards the angry woman with red/green hair.

"Execute~"

Brrrrrrrrr

"Wha-what is that?!"

Named "Living clod", the Gimmick item was around fifteen centimeters long, twenty centimeters wide, and moved like a caterpillar. Valerie immediately jumped back when it suddenly appeared under her feet. The woman lost her concentration, and the whip around her arm had disappeared. Yuusuke did not miss the chance and had modified the Map Item, imprisoning her distracted opponent with the defensive walls.

"What?!"

Valerie, alarmed by the flash of light and the fluttering light particles that she saw at her feet, raised her eyes, but could only stare dumbfounded at the walls of her prison that she had suddenly found herself in.

This new type of defensive wall was thinner, so Yuusuke could create more walls from the same amount of soil. After closing in the girl, Yuusuke decided to prioritize treating the wounded man over talking with his caged in opponent.

"Wa-wait!"

"I won't. It would be terrible if his condition worsens while I chat with you."

"What…?"

Valerie had somewhat calmed down because of the earlier events, and could only react

that much to Yuusuke's reply.

Yuusuke returned to the still passed out Odo and resumed to tending his wounds. The small wounds and bruises started to disappear quickly as the medicine started to take its effect. Only after seeing that had Valerie realized what kind of misunderstanding she had caused.

The woman hung her head down, ashamed of the incident that she had caused whilst Welsh and Livon had rushed to her side. Eyeing Yuusuke, who continued to heal Odo, Welsh tried to break the wall with his knife and free Valerie.

Yet, he could not even scratch it. In fact, the earth wall could be destroyed by a powerful divine art or a heavy blunt weapon, however the two of them did not have anything as flashy in their disposal.

"Milady, milady, can you please try using your arts on the walls?"

"Eh, my flame whip? B-but…"

"That person is the Darkness God Corps' captain. It would be terrible if he would discern our identities."

While the three were whispering about Yuusuke, Odo had regained his consciousness. He looked around the surroundings and saw Valerie imprisoned within the walls. Forgetting all his wounds, the artless rushed towards the wall.

"Aaaaaah My lady!! Why are you imprisoned like this?!"

"O-Odo…"

"Odo-kun…"

"That means… Can those two be…?"

Yuusuke called out to the green haired man that seemed to be the most reserved out of the bunch. Welsh, the one that Yuusuke called out to, hid his anxiousness and smiled back bitterly at the Captain. First he had to thank for saving Oda's life and apologize for their lady's reckless behavior for a later time.

"Please pardon our lady for behaving like that earlier. Odo is a very important servant of hers."

"Captain–!"

"Yuusuke-san!"

Seeing a group, dressed in black, running towards them from the other street, Welsh became even gloomier. His task to negotiate Valerie's release just became much more complicated.

["C-can I manage to deceive all of them?…"]

Chapter 80: Conference of the Three

"Th-thank you very much… for what you have done for Odo."

"Don't worry, I couldn't leave him lying like that."

Yuusuke had retracted the stone walls, freeing Valerie from her prison, and ordered Aisha's group to heal Odo. At the same time he tried to question everyone about what was going on here. Odo's wounds were clearly caused by humans.

Was he robbed, or has he gotten into a fight with other people. No matter the reason, there seemed to be some people in the city that needed to pay for their actions.

Being taken care of by a group of knights, skilled in healing arts, Odo began looking better and better. Valerie felt relieved and then turned pale, noticing that Yuusuke and the others had belonged to the Darkness God Corps. She directed her worried gaze at Welsh and Livon.

Both of her consorts looked as pale as her and were wringing their minds, trying to find a way out of their current situation.

["Our most important objective is to keep them away from exposing us."]

["But how did Odo manage to get so far?"]

The two whispered between themselves. Certainly he must have been wounded by some bandits, however Welsh couldn't understand how Odo managed to get here.

"That's right, why are you here, Odo? Did you come here alone?"

"Y-yes! Chief Adjutant General Fyotress and treasurer Airzah are scheming to kill you, your highness. That's why I—"

Odo did not know the situation his princess was in, and completed his task – informed his Princess about the conversation between the Chief Adjutant General and the treasurer that he had heard by chance.

Shortly after leaving the camp he was ambushed by Fyotress' troops, but somehow managed to escape them. Unable to use the movement type wind arts nor the healing type water arts, Odo pushed on without rest until he had finally collapsed after reaching the port town.

Yuusuke was unable to comprehend the full scope of the explanation and tilted his head in confusion, but the young man's story made Valerie and her two attendants stiffen altogether.

"Chief Adjutant General Fyotress and treasurer Airzah… where have I heard of them?"

"A certain organization perhaps? These names belong to the executives of Wind Edge."

"Aaah!" Yuusuke clapped his hands (rolled one hand into a fist and hit the other hand with it) at Vermeer's explanation. The Darkness God Corps members exchanged glances, and then—

"YOU FOOL!!—"

"Uwaaa! I'm sorry!"

Valerie hit Odo with a fist. ["It's over,"] Welsh's and Livon's expressions were too easy to read.

***

"So, care to explain what is actually going on here?"

At this moment Yuusuke ordered them to explain themselves. Valerie and the rest seemed to have an idea on what was happening here, and had a concrete reason for being here. In addition, he wanted an explanation for the information that Odo had delivered them.

Valerie was the figurehead for the core clan behind Wind Edge. Three strong clans were hiding in its shadow, and had this internal rebellion to wrest the authority from the Elfdras.

"The initial aim of the organization was to take over Trent Rietta, but…"

"In the beginning, it was expected that the organization would take ten to twenty years to amass the necessary forces."

Welsh spoke of how the trends within their organization had become increasingly more warlike since they had started training beast handlers in the evil beast research institute.

The princess was completely against the extreme and questionable ways of the organization, so the three clans had probably joined together in an attempt to assassinate the princess and take control of the organization in one clean sweep.

Seeing herself as more than just a figurehead of the organization the entire time, the person in question had hung her head low in despair.

And, at the same moment –

"Basically, the leader was chased out."

A group in black, gathered at one corner of the street, put heavy pressure on their counterparts. However the situation that was so tense just a moment ago was shattered instantly by a person, who nonchalantly cut in between Yuusuke's group.

"Shinha?!"

"It's been a while, Yuusuke."

Yuusuke looked towards the Moon Mirror Lake, then – towards Isotta, who only silently shook her head in response. She couldn't find signs of any more Artless soldiers in the vicinity.

"So, have you come alone again…?"

Snicker

Rumors about the current head of the Elfdras family and the leader of Wind Edge hiding in Fonclanc's harbor town had reached Shinha. He immediately reacted, sending his army towards the harbor town until the organization's intentions were made clear.

"So the army on the peninsula on the opposite shore of the lake is the Silver Blade?"

"That's right. I feared that Wind Edge would also attack Fonclanc."

"We thought that the enemy's leader herself had come to the front lines, but for it to be just a sightseeing trip… moreover for that leader to have little to no say in the actions of the organization…" Shinha ridiculed himself for his oversight.

"That means that Gazzetta is not acting together with Wind Edge?"

"Ah, it's not related to that in particular, but could you explain me about the army that is stationed at the highway? They seem to be acting separately."

Although Wind Edge had sent messengers to Gazzetta, seeking to declare their plans against Fonclanc and Trent Rietta, and invited Gazzetta to form a joint front; Shinha decided to see Wind Edge in action before agreeing to the offer.

"Well, judging from the movements of those guys, they are unlikely to make a move without us."

It seemed that the exchange will take a while so, at Yuusuke's suggestion, everyone had moved to the meeting room of the large building that the town guard had provided them with, and sat around a table, much to the dismay of the knights, who had seen the fight and could not believe that their commander would put himself through such risk to hold this meeting.

"Is that really Gazetta's King?"

"They called that read head a leader of the Elfdras clan."

Unfazed by the gazes directed at him, Yuusuke opened the meeting while loudly slurping on a cup of tea.

"Please, take a seat."

"Thanks for your consideration."

"Thanks~"

"Ah, I'll take you up on the offer."

Welsh was looking at the strange party at the table and did not see the Darkness God Corps' attendant, who was offering him a chair.

The attendant was wearing clean and tidy clothes, and her hair had a lustrous glister. It was obvious, that she was an important person (that she was cared for) within the corps. Other black dressed people were calmly spectating the meeting and did not show a bit of worry. They were simply used to such things.

"…this really shows the ability of the Darkness God Corps, no, their Captain."

“Yeah, no doubt about that.”

If he weren’t treating Artless as equals, if he hadn’t helped Odo, if he hadn’t disregarded Valerie’s rampage, if he hadn’t provided a place to discuss everything between Fonclanc, Gazzetta, and Trent Rietta to share their knowledge on the situation, there was no way to tell how the war would have progressed.

Seeing this the two agreed, that this person, commanding the strongest unit of Fonclanc, was indeed a Hero.

“It it’s him, maybe he will not harm our lady.”

“Please, don’t hurt her…”

Slightly more relieved, Welsh smiled bitterly at Valerie, motioning him to join her, and stood up from his chair.

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Valerie had called Welsh to explain the internal structure of the organization as well as depict the evil beast soldiers and those supporting them to the other participants.

Valerie only suspected commander Benefost to be scheming against her, but the news that Odo had brought made it clear how much in the dark she was kept, because she still believed that she could finish the war by pleading her forces to surrender.

“Only her personal elite squad is still loyal to her within the organization. They are not only stronger than the usual troops, but they are also well trained in combat tactics.”

“So, evil beast handlers aside, most of the remaining troops in the Wind’s Edge are mercenaries.”

Yuusuke and Vermeer sorted through all the information, selecting what to report to his Corps, the King, and what to send to Hivodir’s group and ordered Isotta to transmit it, keeping the remainder of what was said at the table for himself. There were some parts that he could only make conjectures about, including movements and the true strength of their force, and the whereabouts of the commander.

“Can we assume that adjutant general Fyotress is the factual leader?”

“Mhm… I believe he is making finance official Airzah to be the face of the Wind’s Blade, while he himself is the one pulling the strings,” pointed out Welsh.

“Good, I understand. Let’s finish here for today. Everyone, thanks for your opinions.”

After closing the discussion, Yuusuke ordered to release the guards around the area from their duties and offered Valerie’s party rooms in the inn that the Corps were staying in.

“Do we have any empty rooms?”

“We can free two of them.”

“Th-then I will … with the lady…”

"I will be staying with the miss. Odo, you will be staying with Welsh."

Sun pushed Valerie in the back, urging the rest of her party to follow. Welsh bowed his head to Yuusuke for the reception and hospitality, and led the downhearted Odo up the stairs.

That left only Yuusuke, Vermeer, Isotta, Aisha, and Shinha in the room. Shaheed had left to survey the area around the lake, to search for any signs of assassins that might be aiming for Valerie, while Fonke was tasked with the usual intelligence duties. To break the silence that had fallen upon the room, Yuusuke asked Shinha something that he had been meaning to ask for a long time.

"Why did you (as a King) come here by yourself again?"

"Ahh, to tell the truth, depending on the situation I planned to attack Trent Rietta from Fonclanc's highway." Shinha casually revealed his plan as if it was not a military secret. This also meant that at the same time he had been keeping watch on Fonclanc's movements.

Shinha wanted to provoke some sort of reaction from Yuusuke, but the Evil God just briefly glanced his way as if replying ["And?"]

Disappointed by the response, Shinha overheard that knights were to be sent to relay the information to the Darkness God Corps members that were not present at the meeting, and instead offered to do it himself, implying that a familiar face would be more reliable.

"Oh well… but do you believe it's good to leave your army (the White Sword Cavalry) to continue marching like that?"

"Don't worry they are used to it."

"I prefer to continue to worry about them, even just a little bit."

Once again, although Shinha did not show any open hostility, he made it clear that the ideological differences between the two countries were too deep. Vermeer expressed that on top of carelessly entering the territory of a foreign nation, Shinha was also creating precedents for all kinds of bad rumors.

"If you are afraid of that then feel free to go and defend the shore"

"I would if it wasn't impossible to do."

Artless were difficult to track because they lacked a divine arts aura. On top of that, the trained artless soldiers were able to approach divine arts users undetected. Vermeer shook his head, sighing, when Shinha replied in his usual carefree tone.

"… in a sense, we are a bane of the divine arts users."

In the current society, having a divine arts aura was a norm. People are creatures that adapt to their current environment, and are faced with troubles when they have to make decisions involving developments that they had not anticipated.

One such case was happening right now, in a world that had been under the divine arts

users' control for centuries.

"People with auras and people without it…"

***

Yuusuke was going with Shinha until the wharf to see him off (under a pretense of keeping watch on him).

"I wonder, what'll become of Trent Rietta?"

"Now that you mention it, their capital has fallen, hasn't it?"

There was no news from Rinwaal since the news of its demise had arrived. Hivodir was continuing to hold his position and was also sending spies to survey the situation.

"We, Gazzettians, don't really care who controls Trent Rietta, but the aims of the Wind's Edge is an entirely different thing."

Shinha laughed, completely confident that anyone who attacked Gazzetta would be utterly crushed. Yuusuke did not know if he should be laughing or groaning over this king of belief. Chatting like that, the two arrived at the wharf, overlooking the Moon Mirror Lake.

"Grandma sends her regards, come and play with her sometime. You can even come as a friendship ambassador."

"Coming as an ambassador is probably impossible. And I am not a lolicon… no, she's over three thousand years old – that makes her my elder… damn it I don't care either way…"

["What is a 'lolicon', I wonder?"] Shinha tilted his head, trying to understand Yuusuke, finally giving up on trying to understand the Evil God's troubles. At Yuusuke's explanation, Shinha's face became grim as he remembered the stories about his grandfather.

"Ah, I nearly forgot, be careful about the beasts that escaped from the institute."

With these warning, Shinha had boarded a ship that headed toward the peninsula on the opposite shore of the lake. As a matter of fact, the ship was rented by the Darkness God Corps under a fake name.

"To swim over the lake to this side, what was he thinking…" muttered Yuusuke as he watched the small boat becoming a dot in the horizon, and turned to walk back to the inn.

During dinner, a message had arrived from Hivodir, saying that they had taken in King Griffzah under their protection.

Chapter 81: Happenings on the street of the relay town

Hivodir's reinforcements that had earlier headed to Rinval were currently assisting in King Cliffzard's escape, while an emergency measure meeting was being held in Volance palace. At the same time, the Darkness God Corps was getting ready to head towards Trent Rietta.

The discussion on how to handle the custody of Valerie and her members would be held after dinner.

Considering their circumstances other than knowing the organisation and simply being a captive, Valerie was just being used by the organisation.

Whether it was using magical beasts as part of the Wind Edge's forces, Valerie was upset with the actions the 3 officers had undertaken which had dishonoured the Elfodoras Family. She hoped that asking the organization members to surrender would cause turmoil within the inner part of Wind Edge.

"It's possible, but what should I do?"

"What to do huh...the choice is yours. You should decide the path you want to follow."

"I see"

Soon after, King Esvosbus approved the proposal of the Darkness God Corps. A few days ago, King Cliffzard was reorganizing the army that had escaped together with him from the battle at Rinval's the Wind Edge forces, and the unofficial participation of the head of the Elfdoras family was recognized as a strategy by the Darkness God Corps.

Valerie will be there representing, to atone for her family, by helping King Cliffzard to reclaim the capital.

The next day, Hivodir's reinforcement had joined up with Trent Rietta's liberation army on the shoreline highway and the advance to Rinval began.

The investigation unit that was under the Darkness God Corps, was currently in the border relay town, which was on the highway that connected directly to Rinval. They were there to support Hivodir's reinforcements and Trent Rietta's Liberation army.

Vermeer and Welsh anticipated that an interception force might come from Driadria.

"The forces in Driadria consist of 2 battalions of mercenaries totaling around 480. The magical beast unit will have around 12."

"However, the number of mercenaries in the capital is somewhere around the thousands… The combined forces of the reinforcement and liberation army might not even reach ¼ of theirs."

"If all the mercenaries were to fight, they would be a threat. But considering the situation now, the upkeep expenses of such an army are unreasonably high.."

"I believe that the general affairs officer, Fortress, will most likely use the capital reserves and the civilians in military employment."

If they were to be successful integrated into Wind Edge's army, the total estimated force will be around 2000 people, however ~~

"Well, since the old days, the citizens' nature were hard to alter, so there will be those who would refuse the call out."

"Ah….I know that feeling."

Due to the frequent changes of the King and hearing the reasons to change the throne, the people understood that the rebellion was unrelated to them. While the reinforcements and Trent Rietta's Army were doing a rough strategy training, the Darkness God Corp's survey party had arrived at the relay town on the border.

In the Wind Edge HQ located at Rinval's palace, general affairs officer Fortress, is currently analyzing all sorts of information that was coming in. The footsteps of Financial officer Aizhar, who had just finished paying the contracted mercenaries could be heard approaching.

"Seriously, these unplanned expenses! At this rate, the fundings for hiring mercenaries will be in the red next month!"

The capturing of the remaining Trent Rietta forces in the capital wasn't going as well as the financial officer had hoped, so he was cursing and having a headache over the depleting war funds.

The fact is that King Cliffzard is still going strong, Fonclanc's reinforcement is at the coastline near the border, the Darkness God Corps who could deter the attacks are moving, while the three officers don't have any unity amongst themselves.

The speeches that were held to inspire a new era of progress in the Trent Rietta Empire didn't seem to get much of a response. Although it seems to be "a wait and see" situation, there were opportunistic citizens in Trent Rietta who would direct their anger at the Finance officer.

"In reverse, by beating the Darkness God Corps with our power, the citizens would follow us."

"....is it possible? Even in the middle of the experiment, those guys were the ones who killed the magical modded beast in their first encounter."

"If we can't, we can be considered defeated. Of course, there are some odds for winning."

They began spread rumors like this, by borrowing Fonclanc's strength to recapture Trent Rietta meant the surrendering of Trent Rietta to Fonclanc's general and because of the strict rules that Fonclanc had, the freedom the citizens had up until now would be restricted.

By forming an anti-Gazzetta military alliance and tying the governing of Trent Rietta,

after a short while King Cliffzard would sell out the country. Thus in order to prevent this from happening, Wind Edge is currently taking a confrontational stance against Fonclanc's aggressive attitude.

"If we can defend against Fonclanc's reinforcement and King Cliffzard's liberation army, while shutting down the Darkness God Corps, the citizens will definitely stand by us."

Fortunately, they knew that the Darkness God Corps, in order to restrain Gazzetta's army landing, is currently rushing in small groups to regroup with the reinforcement at Rinval.

"For the defence here in the capital we can use the magical beasts and mercenaries."

There shouldn't be many magic flutes that were leaked out from the facility. In fact there were only a few people who actually knows how to correctly use the magical flute to control the 50 magical beast in the capital and there are only about 5 to 6 magical flutes.

"Military officer - dono. Take one battalion of the organisation's elites and the troops that had remained in Driadria to intercept the Darkness God Crops."

"Hiaz, to even use Driadria's forces. Fonclan's strongest corps doesn't even number to a hundred to use three battalion including elites…."

Can it be done~~? And this was the organization of forces that Aizhar came to after many thoughts. The confirmed amount of elite forces that the Darkness God Corps have is around 70, against the forces that they currently have here that are exhausted from the recent battle which total at nine hundred and thirty people comprising of three battalions and elites, it should be trivial. Even with a reduced number of magical beasts it will still be a win.

"Okay, an interception squad will go and hinder the movement of the Darkness God Corps."

During that time, the military officer will take one battalion of elites from Rinval, merge with the two battalions in Driadria and then link up with the interception squad that is hindering the Darkness God Corps and crush them.

The interception squad's role is to hinder their use of wind assist skills, by making use of the magical beast unit which could interrupt movement assist, it should leave them stranded.

"Tomorrow, the Darkness God Corps should be arriving at the village that has a highway connecting to Rinval. The middle and surrounding area of the village will most probably turn into a battlefield."

"This will be a race against time, immediately direct the battalions at Driadria to here and get the military officer a sortie request!"

Making footsteps like when Aizhar arrived at the HQ, the general affairs officer was about to leave when he was halted.

"Something is bothering me though….., the assassin we released for Reie ojou-sama have not returned."

“Un? That said, the man pursuing that artless kid has reported back.”

Fortress made a huge laugh as he had completely forgot about her, while Aizhar remained expressionless. “If Lady Valerie was still alive” it would have an adverse effect, thus he urged the officer to pursue the assassin for the confirmation.

“There are still members in the organisation that believes Ojou-sama is the head. Especially, the military officer must not know of it….”

“Yikes that is truly unfavorable! Immediately make arrangements.”

After noticing the general affairs officer’s changed expression by his words, Aizhar left the HQ.

Previously, it was under a pretext of supporting an investigation by the branch of the Trade Association on the damages done by the magical beast in the town near the border. But tomorrow, the Darkness God Corps will however be on a forced march, thus they have to be ready for action.

As planned, they will leave the town early in the morning tomorrow, where they will have an early lunch at the relay town. After contacting with Hivodir’s reinforcements, they will then proceed towards Rinval.

“The arrangement is that the reinforcement forces and liberation army will attack first, while the corps will break in from the side.”

“But, the people on our side who can participate in the break in for the attack is about forty people right?”

“Yes, but our main job is easy, it’s to protect the captain.”

“It is~~”

Vermeer frankly stated that from the beginning the strategy was focused on Yuusuke’s power. First they had to destroy all the magic flutes that control the magical beasts, the number of beasts will be considered a problem after.

It seems that Wind Edge had been recruiting mercenaries around the area of Driadria since the Magical beast facility incident.

They had also considered hiring mercenaries within Fonclanc, naturally funds had to be prepared, but there weren’t many mercenaries as there wasn’t much work to do within Fonclanc.

“Hm….unlike the other time in Paula where we had brought along materials, this break in will be much harder.”

“Well, the corps just has to attract the attention of the enemy, isn’t defence and disturbance the area of expertise of the captain?”

“We can count on him” as Vermeer placed his hand on Yuusuke’s shoulder while laughing.

“Count on me, is it….”

“....Yuusuke-san?”

Night, in the deserted square of the town, Sun called out to him as Yuusuke was looking up at the night sky cloud that was passing by.

“Ng? What’s wrong Sun, can’t sleep?”

“No, I just happen to catch sight of Yuusuke-san…. Want to talk for a bit?”

Yuusuke and Sun began strolling down the silent streets of the town. It wasn’t a bad time to have a little slow talk for tonight as no one knows what will happen in the decisive battle tomorrow.

After finding a suitable place, he began using his customization skill. A stylish mesh designed bench appeared for both of them to sit.

“So what’s bothering you?”

“You noticed?”

“Yes.”

“I see.”

Although the sentences were short. The short conversations seemed innocent, but it was of trust. As the cold night wind blows at them, the distance between the two of them seems to get closer, Sun decided to take a bold chance.

“Please open up to me. I will also give Yuusuke-san….everything.”

Understanding the meaning behind the word “everything”, and after remembering a specific incident, Yuusuke began to blush red. Right then, Yuusuke understood his feelings which he had discovered recently, and knowing his position, he began to talk.

Originally, he would be more suitable as Violet’s aide in the palace while researching and doing what he liked daily. But he had been doing heroic stuff and being called to the battlefield, and he expected to get soldiers for subordinates, but the subordinates seemed to have been brought from a peaceful environment.

“Shaheed had previously said.”

“To possess an ability that can be used to do anything, but only if the conditions are right, if that was the case he would possibly be able to choose the type of mission, however that would also mean giving up his duties and responsibilities.”

Ever since he had been summoned to this world, he realized that many huge events seemed to have occurred. Before he arrived, the various conspiracies had stayed hidden somewhere around the world, unlike now, where they were erupting from the surface of the shadows where they once lurked. There is a chance that they might just disappear if they were left hidden.

Was it the nature of the Evil God to attract chaos around him, he himself can't seem to connect the dots leading to greater events.

"After hearing the strategy details from Vermeer, I felt that I myself wasn't really prepared."

"Prepared?"

In order to cope with the things that are happening, he had half-heartedly introduced things around his vicinity like the car, the cultivation of solar moss, research of the elixir, which changed the "world". But these were within the narrow fields of constraints.

Creating a law that protects the Artless which had overthrown the common sense of this world, originally this was due to Isotta's life. If he didn't say anything to Violet nothing would have occurred.

"In the end, I am just me right?"

Creating a fortress and walls in Blue Garden. Coming with ways to solve things ingeniously, doing things in his mission beyond what others can do. Running away from Nossentes without doing anything. Only retaliating if being attacked, although he couldn't actively prevent Shinha's invasion.

Even he had no choice but to act during the magical beast incident. Only to realize that it feels like he's being led by a leash.

"Let's deepen the knowledge of the world" although Violet had said that, not trying to know the world, is not being concerned about it. The battle, this time is centred around his powers, thus there is some pressure for him to answer their expectations.

『共に世界を知り見識を深めて行こうじゃないか』などとヴォレットに言ってみせた割には、世界を知ろうとしていない、関わろうとしていない。今回の戦いでも、自分の力を中心にした作戦として掛けられている期待には答えるつもりもある。

However, this requires him to perform beyond what he has done before. Of course, doing this will increase his status within the country, while refraining from selfish actions, although at this rate he might become the Hero of Fonclanc, but is this good? He wondered.

"To say one thing or another, I myself am scared of the things that will be caused by...me."

Speaking, opening up his heart, Yuusuke once again looked towards the sky and sighed as Sun gently hugged him. She gently held him as Yuusuke's monologue was getting heated by his thoughts.

"Sun?"

"Yuusuke-san is earnestly working hard."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. I believe that you don't need to force yourself if you don't want to."

Burying her face into Yuusuke's chest, Sun continued to speak.

"It doesn't matter whether you're the Evil God or not. Yuusuke-san is Yuusuke-san, live as you like."

"I see…. Was I just too eager?"

Yuusuke suddenly remembered the saying he had once told Razshia, "Let nature flow."~~

"....yet again, I will do it with a smile."

~~ wondering when he had told Razshia, his body became stiff. Although being aware of his own image, it is different when things had fallen upon himself.

"....."

"Difficult right? Yuusuke-san must live a Yuusuke-like life."

Sun slightly moved away from him, her hand gently reaching out to the blushing cheeks reflected upon Yuusuke's eyes. Sun's skinny fingers envelops Yuusuke's cheeks.

"Erm?"

"Like Yuusuke-san said before, you didn't really want to be assertive….that's why~~"

Sun slowly brought her face closer. As their lips and eyes became glued to each other, Yuusuke could feel his heart beating violently. Was it his own heart beating, or was it Sun's heart that was captured by the customization ability beating. Sun gently closed her eyes as their faces drew closer and their noses touched.

The distance between their lips were mixed with moist and hot breath as Sun stopped moving. Yuusuke stopped moving as well. His face could feel the beating from the hot fingers resonating with his pulse. A grain of a teardrop from Sun's closed eye fell onto Yuusuke's back.

A sleeve of a black uniform could be seen wrapping across the white attendant uniform, hugging the petite body. As though the darkness is covering the light.

"Ng…."

He felt like temporarily escaping.

"However, this time nevertheless….."

Yuusuke decided to receive the comfort of Sun's soft, warm body, the gentle scent and sweet lips.

Chapter 82: No title (Part 1)

The next day, as planned, the Darkness God Corps with the investigation group departed the town and headed towards their objective at dawn.

During their early lunch, they will replenish their water supply and receive the contact from Hivodir's reinforcements, that were heading to the capital, to get the details for the afternoon battle.

Vermeer foresees that Rinval's defence forces will most likely merge together with Driadria's forces by the highway, to restrain them from advancing.

"Want me to go scout?"

"Yes, make sure there isn't an ambush."

Having movement assist and transmission, Fonke's group is very useful as a Scout troop. Along with Yuusuke's motorbikes, Fonke's group went to scout ahead. As though waiting for a ride, Fonke subordinates hopped on the back of the 2 motorbikes.

"Well we will go ahead now!"

"Don't over extend~"

In front of the boorish walls of the north gate, where the city view of Rinval and the Wind Edge institute could be seen, Hivodir's Reinforcement troops and King Cliffzard's Trent Rietta Liberation Army deployed their troops into formation.

Mercenaries could be seen scurrying about on the other side of the wall. It seems that they weren't ready for a counter attack, thus Hivodir was considering testing their resistance.

The reinforcement troops were made up of officers from different corps, and the selection of people from the palace corps were mostly composed of people who had not been in a battle before. Thus before going into a full-scale battle, small skirmishes are required.

The Reinforcement troops slowly approached them and stopped just before the effective range of divine arts. Noticing their approach, the Wind Edge's army on the wall readied their bows and the figures of the mercenaries began to pop up. The Wind Edge's army had implemented the anti-divine arts field of the magical beasts into their strategy, thus they mainly used ranged attack weapons such as bows.

Next, the scouts of the liberation army came from the west highway of Rinval to notify the location of the assault group. They reported that 3 battalion sized groups have joined up from Driadria and were on the move.

"Is their strategy to come and flank us from the sides or the back?"

"No, it seems that Yuusuke will be approaching via the west highway….perhaps their target is the Darkness God Corps?"

Hivodir immediately tried to alert the currently moving Darkness God Corps that was on the highway, although he knew that they would not receive the wind transmission until the late morning. It seems that the forest in between the highways was causing transmission interference.

"Most likely it's the minority forces that had headed out early in the morning to deploy it."

Hivodir immediately assembled a squad with movement assist and wind transmission and instructed them to move with urgency towards the Darkness God Corps to notify them, next he immediately assessed the remaining Wind Edge army's strength and began strategizing his plan of attack.

"The troops remaining in the capital are about 2 battalion sized groups of mercenaries, about 2 times the amount of our troops."

But they can win. At least it's better than facing a force 4 times stronger. After Hivodir gave his inspirational speech talking about his experience to the fellow nervous commanders, he began his attack to recapture Rinval together with the Liberation army.

Fonke and his scouts, whom had advanced ahead towards the town, immediately turned back when he felt the anti-divine arts aura. After receiving the reports about magical beast lurking in the middle of the highway, Yuusuke distributed the magic flutes to half of the Darkness God Corps members and the investigation group.

"Erm, Yuusuke-dono…..are these real magic flutes?"

"Ng? Ah, these are replicas, I made sure that they do the same thing as the originals."

"Replicas...."

To be this prepared for magical beast, Welsh was surprised by the large amount of complex magic flutes that were duplicated in such a small amount time, they even had the same design.

He was marveled by the strength of a huge country which had a great amount of earth user craftsmen. But in actual fact, it was Yuusuke who replicated the items, thus Yuusuke couldn't tell him about it as they weren't fully aware of his powers.

The north wall of Rinval ~~

"Oi What's going on! Those fellas have been using their divine arts while advancing!"

"The magical beast movement have been strange since just now! Are they really doing their work?"

"They look like they have a lot of magic flutes over there! Archers shoot their magic flutes."

“To have such skillful imitations!”

With most of the magical beast heading to hinder the Darkness God Corps advancement, there were some remaining magical beasts at the gate. However, since this is the first time Hivodir was acting as the commanding officer for the reinforcement force, every one of them possessed a magic flute. Without a pause they continued to blow the flute which caused the magical beast to go mad, thus they successfully neutralized them.

The Wind Edge army, which had relied on the magical beasts, had their tactics backfire against them. Due to the strong firepower from Fonclanc’s god corps divine arts, the mercenaries could only use their enhanced weapons to defend against the long range divine arts attacks.

Because of the anti-divine arts aura, the mercenaries could not use close combat and were forced into a shootout. All of the sudden, the Trent Rietta’s liberation army main forces broke into the Wind Edge army that was at the gate of the wall.

“Ehhh, you guys defend the gate to your last breath! Do not allow any of them to pass!”

“Where is the financial officer?”

“At Fortress-dono location, he will be returning soon!”

Shocked by the neutralization of the magical beasts, Financial officer Aizhar headed towards General Affairs officer Fortress to checked if it was possible to recall some troops that were heading to intercept the Darkness God Corp.

“There seems to be a slightly bad development.”

“Yes there is! How did they acquire the magic flutes….”

“Although the fact that the magical beasts becoming useless hurts, but what’s worse is the message that came just now was about Valerie-ojou is working with the Darkness God Corps.”

“Huh!? What, that’s preposterous!”

There is a high chance that the message is already being spread through the organisation which might cause anxiety to their forces.

In order to stop the recapturing of the capital, Fortress immediately headed towards the west highway to recall half of the 3 battalions. As of now, the magical beasts aura is acting as a form of barrier which haven’t been broken.

“We are leaving the military officer in charge of hindering the Darkness God Corps. We are currently recalling part of the forces to the capital, so hold on!”

“Okay, alright!”

On the west highway where the Darkness God Corps and the investigation group were traveling on, Fonke and his party began to slow down the carriages the moment they

felt the anti-divine aura.

The leader of the group began complaining when his wind movement assist art, which had became distorted, this action had verified that the magical beast were lurking nearby. The Darkness God Corps and investigation group began their preparations for the raid as those who were able to fight alighted and surrounded the carriage.

However, there wasn't any signs of an attack and they began to speculate, "are the enemies here to hinder us?"

"A delay tactic in order for Wind Edge to buy time to get ready for the battle."

"So that means that we have make a forceful breakthrough with a speedy exit."

If they were to travel at the rate in which the carriage is traveling alongside being chase by the magical beast, it would take them half a day to arrived at Rinval. In order to avoid this, they would have to kill the magical beasts lurking around.

"Everyone blow the magic flute to disturb the aura, Isotta locate the enemies locations for the punitive forces. Understand?"

"Okay. How many people could be taken from Ash and Shaheed's forces to go subjugate with Fonke and Aisha."

Thus it was decided that the troops deployed around the surrounding area of the carriage would be under Yuusuke's direct supervision, while Isotta's forces would be in charge of guarding Valerie's carriage. After the quick reorganisation of the troops, they began facing towards the forest surrounding the highway and blew the magic flutes in unison.

This caused the magical beasts to fall into a brief state of confusion due to the different wavelengths being emitted from the magic flutes.

"...on the left side, there are 2 in the front, 3 on the side, one of them is hidden deep….whie 2 of them have wind arts aura, on the right there is one moving at walking speed."

Within the moment of confusion, Isotta managed to determine the accurate position of the enemies. The 2 wind arts aura that were found most probably belonged to the controllers of the magical beasts.

According to Welsh, each group of magical beasts consisted of 1 controller and 2 magical beasts, so the 3rd person must be lurking close by.

"On the left of the forest!"

"Understood! Ash flank them."

"Shaheed attack from the front."

"understood."

Immediately after blowing the magic flutes, Vermeer and Shaheed's troops punched into the forest. Yuusuke was standing in line with Sun on the alert facing the right side

of the forest. As Valerie and her party offered to help with an unstable spiraling fire wrapping around her arms.

Confused by the stressful wavelengths of incomprehensible instructions coming from multiple magical flutes, the magical beasts were grinding the back of their ears on the ground.

These troublesome magical beasts became like a normal wild beast the moment their skill was sealed.

"There!"

"Gooo!"

The flaming belt following the arrow that Sun had let out, disappeared in-between the trees. A cry of a magical beast came from the inner forest, the anti-divine arts aura that was covering the surrounding area disappeared completely. "Will it cause the forest to catch fire?" Yuusuke asked with a worried face,"It's possible, I just need to adjust the firepower," replied Valerie jokingly.

The magical beasts in the surrounding were subjucated while the controllers fled into the depths of the forest. Most likely retreating towards Rinval.

"Everything has gone as planned."

"True, let's prepare to move out~~"

"Captain! An emergency call from the reinforcement group…."

With the anti-divine arts aura gone, the transmission interference was lifted, thus Hivodir's signal group was able to transmit information to the Darkness God Corps that were around the coastal route. They had informed them about the 3 battalions heading towards them.

"3 Battalions…"

"That means, close to 900 of them are approaching, as expected ain't it getting dangerous?"

"I heard that the wind edge's army is about 5 battalions. Thus the number of forces remaining in Rinval should be 2 battalions, about 2 times the number of the reinforcement troops plus the liberation army."

"We can crush them using their own schemes."

With that Vermeer had confirmed that the composition of that small magical beast group that they had repelled earlier was here to hinder them.

However, the situation was becoming quite severe. It would be reckless to fight. However, if the Darkness God Corps were to retreat, the troops heading here would return to Rinval and attack the reinforcement troops and the liberation army.

There is the risk of Hivodir's forces being pincered and having an unavoidable retreat.

It would take 3 days even for the hurried Sanc Adiet's reinforcements to arrive. The only option left by the Darkness God Corps in order not to retreat in defeat was to distract at least halve of the enemy's' troops for 3 days.

He began thinking about the ways to buy 3 days of time, with the condition of holding up half of the enemy's troops, the option for creating a fortress is out as there are 10 times the number of enemies which would result in a permanent offensive of day and night siege. Thus it is not possible.

An early retreat is no longer an option. The Darkness God Corp's retreat would result in the defeat of the reinforcement troop and liberation army, meaning that Wind Edge had defeated Fonclanc and Trent Rietta.

"What should we do?"

Due to the severity of the situation, Vermeer and the rest dare not carelessly say anything. As the one with the greatest responsibility in the group, Yuusuke will be the one deciding. While Yuusuke was thinking, the rest of the members were silently watching.

Being urged to make a decision, Sun gently grasped Yuusuke's hand.

Yuusuke was deep in his thoughts. He had never played a strategic and tactical simulation game. The number of enemies are great, there wasn't any materials to use his treasured skills to capture them, unlike what happened at Paula.

There were large amount of material for Paula Fortress~

While hanging his head down, Yuusuke saw something moving in the soil which his feet were standing on. The lumps of soil that were dug up by his boots were moving. Yarn earthworms could be seen twisting and circling from the openings.

"!"

In that moment, Yuusuke came to realization. He opened the customization menu and began fiddling with it.

The soldiers became puzzled by the sudden unique rite of the Darkness God Captain. To add on to their confusion, Yuusuke was smiling as though he had attain something powerful. In an instant, the noise around the area had disappeared.

Yuusuke in the moment grabbed and embraced Sun as she began to blush in embarrassment, after that he turned around and began to announce his decision to the members.

"This is good."

Ground customization worked only within a fixed distance from the place that Yuusuke was touching it. Until now that was absolute.The distance of the range the materials can be moved from the ground is the same range of the ground that can also be use as materials. In that moment, he successfully used a customized rod shaped material to connect the ground as an extension of a grouped item.

Up until now point A is located far away from point B where the different kind of

materials for customizing were at, treating material A and material B individually, thus a certain range was required when creating structures like a lodging house or a small fortress.

The foundation materials A-C, the exterior wall material D-F, and the inner wall material G-I, this was the combination.

The idea that came to him this time was that the materials from A and C were previously summarized as one group. Although it took a while for the first time, after grouping the items once it becomes much easier the next time.

It will take time to create a lodging house or a small fortress from ground up with additional material, but during the dismantling it is almost instant as the building as a whole was treated as one item.

Up until now the materials were to be prepared as a group item, however now with this blind spot there was no need to.

Yuusuke declared his decision to engage the enemy instead of retreating, the non-combatants and their escorts carriages, moved towards the rear in preparations for combat. Vermeer, Shaheed, Welsh were being called to assemble for their opinions on the minute details.

The remaining soldiers believed in their Darkness God Corps captain Yuusuke and began working on their own tasks.

"I see...this is a really bold strategy."

"However, I believe that captain's power could do it."

"Althought I'm an outsider, I do not understand to what extent is Yuusuke's power, but I will do my best to gather whatever information necessary for the strategy."

"Okay first we need to~~"

The width of the highway is a size where a common carriage could traverse on, or a total of 5 armed soldiers with leather gear standing side by side could walk on. Although deploying a group of people would not be a problem if they extend it to the side of the forest, however transporting 900 people isn't going to be easy.

It is hard to tell if the terrain around the forest is flat, even if they had cleared part of the area around the highway for the carriages to run, the number of people it could carry would still be restricted. Due to circumstances, they would have to lure the enemy by foot to certain locations.

As the enemies started to gather nearby, they began to predict the encounter site. There wasn't much time left.

The preparations for the strategy were progressing well, good news of the situation turning better had come in. Information from the liberation army spy, states that about half of the 3 battalion had re-routed back to Rinval.

According to the information that Isotta had picked up, currently the reinforcement troops and the liberation army was engaging in a battle at the North Gate of Rinval

against the Wind Edge army. It seems that the disruption of the magical beasts had worked.

“That should be the result of the over reliance on the magical beast.”

Welsh muttered docilely.

“Okay, we have roughly found the encounter site. Let’s head out, Fonke.”

“Roger, I have been waiting!”

Fonke began driving his motorbike, while Yuusuke start running his preparations on the highway. At the same time, Vermeer and the rest were doing dry run exercise. Although they were hopeful in victory, it would be brutal if they failed.

“Now, I am looking forward to it.”

Chapter 83: No title (Part 2)

[TLN: Benefost is actually a female, so she will be referred to as such from this chapter on. I'll backtrack and replace earlier chapters at a later time.]

Yuusuke started to work on customizing the high road surface when he was closing in to the expected clash site, enveloping the surroundings with the fluttering lights. In one customization he managed to fill six hundred meters of the road with traps.

As he was approaching the expected battle ground, Yuusuke started to work on customizing the high road surface. Enveloping the surroundings with fluttering lights, in one customization he managed to to fill six hundred meters of road with traps.

Upon arriving at the soon-to-be battlefield, Yuusuke repeated the same customization on the road behind him. He also added a small path to connect both areas. With that, around two kilometers of road was customized for the upcoming battle.

"Phew, somehow I managed to get it done in time. I leave the rest to you."

"Understood. I'll take over from here."

Placing poles to mark the beginning and the end of the eastern customized area, he ordered a decoy group – a small squad consisting of twenty four soldiers, specializing in either long distance offensive divine arts, movement divine arts, or communication type wind arts – to take their positions.

Led by Vermeer, the squad's mission was to provoke the enemy by harassing them with divine arts and then retreat with the help of the movement buffs.

Watching Vermeer finish his deployment, Yuusuke walked to the opposite side and took control of the western squad, and positioned the troops in front of the eight hundred meter customized area, thus finishing the battle preparations.

The battle formation was as follows: western customized area – Darkness God Corps Investigation Squad – Yuusuke – eastern customized area – decoy squad.

"It seems that they are intending to fight," said someone, watching the battle preparations from within the shadows of the forest.

***

Mercenaries were marching in platoons composing of fifteen people. Twenty of these platoons totaled to four hundred soldiers. In addition, eighty of Benefost's elite soldiers were marching along with the mercenaries. The Darkness God Corps used wind arts to scan the surrounding area and were fully aware of incoming enemies.

"We cannot contact the evil beast soldiers, that…"

"There seems to be no traces of the divine arts obstruction aura."

They were probably annihilated or forced to retreat. In any case they have fulfilled their duty and Benefost valued that. As he was about to denote that, the front mercenary platoon had warned the battalion (t.n. author used 'platoon' to refer to the mercenary

groups, so I chose ‘battalion’ as the closest fitting military unit to the size of the entire force.) of the enemy positions ahead of them.

“Enemy ahead! Around twenty of them – they are attacking us!”

“Hmm, they are trying to challenge us with only one platoon. And when we are outside of the divine arts range too?”

Wondering whether the small platoon had launched a preemptive attack after panicking due to a difference in size or whether it was all part of some sort of battle plan, the small platoon started retreating after firing off their attacks. The battalion was centered on close combat fighters and they had no evil beast handlers. Continuing to advance at the current pace would mean unnecessary losses, so the commander has changed the formation to reinforce the vanguard with defensive art wielding mercenaries and ordered mercenaries to march onward at a brisker pace. However, the platoon had increased their speed, matching it with Wind Edge’s speed.

“Are they intending to retreat? They broke the formation but it doesn’t look like they’re fleeing…”

It was also possible that the other party knew that their long range divine art attacks were barely out of range to do any damage. If they were to retreat while matching the pace of his army, the small squad would only exhaust themselves while dealing no damage to Benefost’s forces.

“Are they aiming to lure us somewhere?”

“We heard that the Darkness God Corps number around seventy. Could it be that they are trying to lure us to their main force?”

Even if the Darkness God Corps planned to attack them, they could not carelessly attack a platoon of this size. Taking the enemy commander’s rapid construction divine art into the consideration, Benefost unwillingly ordered her army to attack.

“EVERYONE, COMMENCE THE ASSAULT! DON’T BE SWAYED EVEN IF YOU SEE A TOWER OR A FORTRESS RISE IN FRONT OF YOU!”

Benefost knew of Yuusuke’s exploits in Sanc Adiet, Blue Garden and the experimental area for Evil Beast research. Thus when ordering the attack she expected for something unusual like that to happen.

“Even if they created something like that here, if we charge them altogether, they won’t be able to wall themselves in.”

It would be a staggering blow for the enemy commander to lose the retreating platoon. Afterwards Benefost would surround the remaining Darkness God Corps forces and slowly wither them down.

With a loud roar, the mercenaries lunged after the retreating group of a famous and distinguished enemy, chasing them as if attempting to swallow them whole… yet a few moments later their target was suddenly enveloped by beads of light and vanished.

“What happened?”

“They vanished?”

“No! Over there!”

“When? Why now?”

Mercenary vanguards could only shout in confusion, when the platoon that was right in front of them had suddenly moved far ahead. The platoon then split into two groups and assumed battle positions. At that moment someone spotted one more person –

“It’s the Fonclanc’s hero!”

“The Darkness God Corps Captain is here!”

***

Following the plan, Vermeer’s platoon used shift-map to whisk away to safety. Following that, Yuusuke confronted the mercenary vanguard by causing underground tremors.

The platoon’s sole purpose was to lure Wind’s Edge inside the modified part of the road. Their strategy was to trek through the forest and then show themselves to their enemy. Afterwards, Vermeer was to retreat while making the enemy believe that they would soon catch up to the small platoon.

“That was really scary,” sighed Vermeer, looking at the exhausted mercenaries, who had spread all around the highway. His own squad, now standing behind Yuusuke, were also panting, exhausted after the chase.

However, their efforts were not in vain – most of the enemy forces now were within the customized area and Yuusuke was fast at work, manipulating the customization menu with his finger.

“…Execute!”

***

Seeing the enemy commander and the Hero of Fonclanc in front of them raised the mercenaries’ bloodlust to the maximum – slaying him would make one’s name echo throughout Kaltcio.

However, the strange art that he had been preparing by pointing his finger at them also had instilled a sort of caution into some of the mercenaries. In the end, the mercenaries brushed their doubts aside – after all, what can such a small force do to them – and plunged forward, weapons drawn.

“Don’t rush, we should be within the range of his walls now!”

“Everyone, retreat!”

Elite soldiers had caught up to the mercenaries and somehow managed to calm them down. Immediately after that, the road began to shine around where they expected a wall to appear. However, once the fluttering sparks had disappeared, the mercenaries were nowhere to be seen.

"Whoa!"

"What was that?! What happened?!"

"A wall? No… a hole."

"W-when did they fall into the hole?!"

A two meter deep hole, or rather a trench, had appeared before them, and the mercenaries were squeezed together at the bottom of this large trench. However, even if the Hero had prepared such a trap in advance, it was impossible even for him to completely disable such a huge army with but a pitfall.

Yet, both sides of the road had shone yet again and walls rose on both sides of the trench. The walls then fell down, enclosing the mercenaries in a huge earthen prison.

"This is…"

"C-commander! The mercenaries…"

"Don't panic, we still outnumber them by far. Divide our forces into attack and rescue squads—" an indistinguishable divine art aura spread throughout the area and the mercenary commander instinctively looked towards the Darkness God Corps captain, where he saw the small platoon that lured them here.

He immediately understood the trap that he had fallen for, however the beads of light had disappeared and soon silence fell on the highway. The cries of birds in the forest and a sound of a black cloak fluttering in the wind were the only sounds that disturbed the now empty road.

"…!"

"… impossible."

The road looked as if nothing had happened here. The mercenaries and their prisons were nowhere to be found. The metallic sound of pieces of armor rubbing at each other and weapons occasionally hitting it were gone.

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["Phew… it went easier than expected."]

Yuusuke's plan to use large scale map item alteration had succeeded spectacularly – the opponent was completely trapped and powerless.

To lure the enemy to the eastern customized area, he raised several walls, leaving the trapped area as a lucrative escape path. Then, he customized traps that looked like irrigation channels. After imprisoning the enemy within a six hundred meter long trap, he turned towards the western area.

In case the mercenaries managed to escape the trap, Yuusuke left half of his force to patrol the eastern area. Then again that was highly unlikely as the ditch itself as well as the walls that fell on top of it were fortified by customization and it would have taken a considerable effort to break out of.

In the beginning Yuusuke planned to create a small fort on the highway and lure the enemy there with movement enhancing customization, however there was not enough time to prepare everything so he had to resort to having Vermeer's group lure the Wind's Edge into the trap.

Looking over his shoulder, Yuusuke nodded at Vermeer, praising his comrades for giving their all in this crazy plan, and turned to face the remaining Wind Edge's forces.

On the other side of the now empty highway, he now could clearly distinguish the figure that was giving orders to the remaining enemy forces.

She was wearing exposing armor, which emphasized her body lines and her voluptuous bust. Characteristic green hair freely fell down her back. She was probably the Military Officer Benefost that Valerie had been speaking of.

"Call Valerie's party over here."

"Understood, transmission officer!"

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Yuusuke asked to call Valerie to the front, hoping to negotiate with Benefost. Meanwhile, on Benefost's side the remaining soldiers had turned pale after witnessing three hundred of their comrades being buried alive and confronted the Wind Edge's elites.

"It was too reckless to challenge the Darkness God Corps! I'll not fight anymore."

"Wait, isn't that a breach of contract?"

"Our contract said nothing about having to fight such a monster!"

"You should've informed us about your intentions to fight the Darkness God Corps from the start."

The soldiers were frightened to their very core and could not think about anything but fleeing. Benefost understood them, but she had nowhere to retreat to. She glared angrilly at the black haired person, framed by a black mantle, standing far ahead of her.

Her warrior's heart beat even faster. "I want to fight him," she murmured, unable to contain the excitement that was boiling within her.

Credits

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